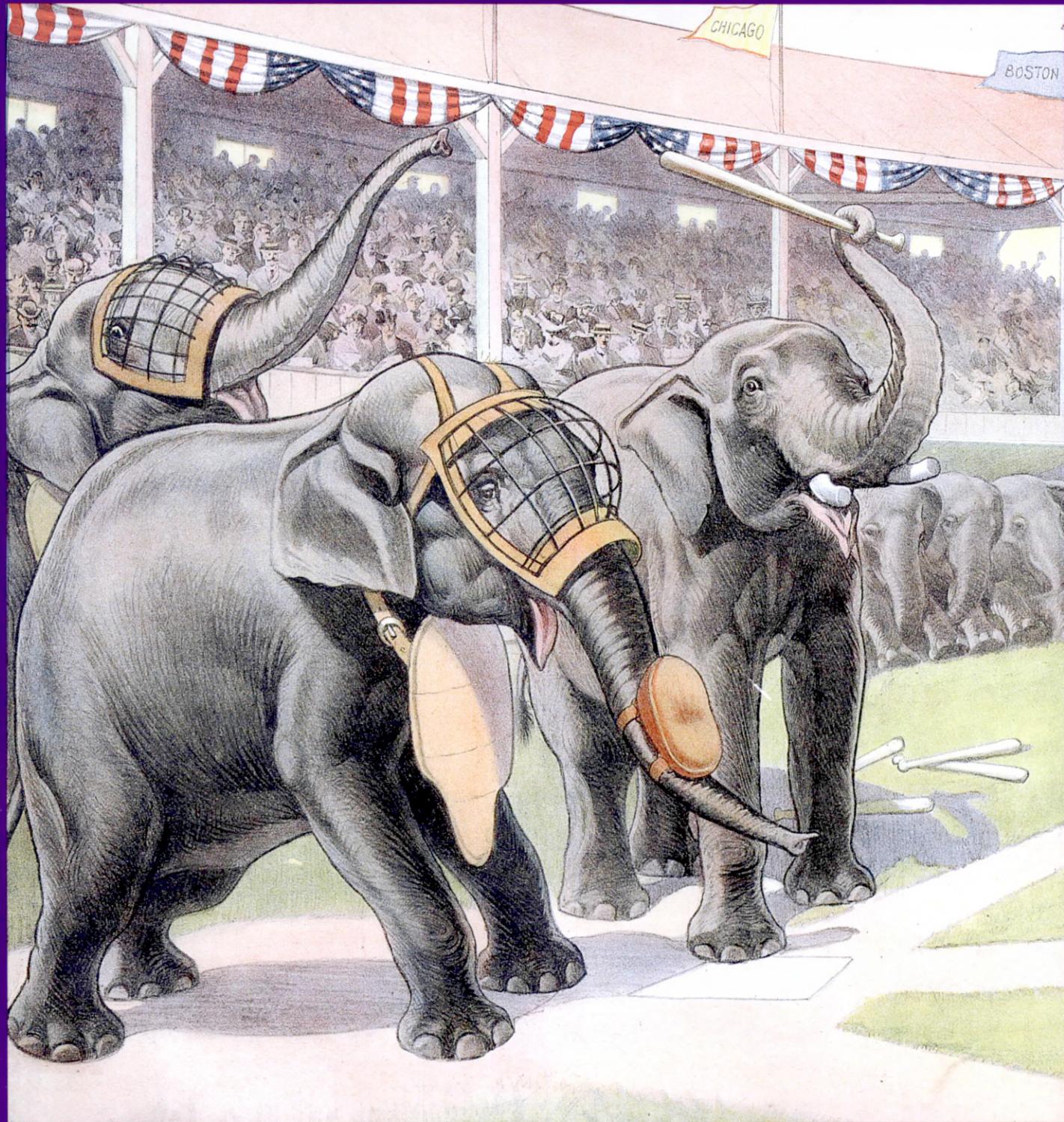


Bandwagon

Vol. 59 No. 3 2015



The Journal of the Circus Historical Society

Did You Know Artie?



Although he stood a little over five feet tall, 14 years after his death Arthur M. Concello continues to cast a long shadow in the circus world. An extraordinary flyer, circus executive, and entrepreneur, Concello is the subject of a book-length biography currently being researched by Maureen Brunsdale and Mort Gamble.

We invite your participation by contributing memories, perspective, suggestions, and original source material.

Please respond to Maureen Brunsdale, Special Collections, 8900 Milner Library, Illinois State University, Normal, IL 61790-8900. Work line: 309-438-2871. <mbrunsdale@ilstu.edu>.

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(Signed by) Martha Roth Wells, 9/30/15

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"To preserve, promote, and share through education the history and cultural significance of the circus and allied arts, past and present."

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Notes from the Editor

It is a great pleasure to be able to publish the work of our dedicated community. This issue has contributions from several longtime members of the Circus Historical Society, each bringing insightful research on their individual topics.

From Dan Draper we have another chronicle of a stellar circus performer, Jean Allen whose talent both on horseback and in the ring with elephants made her a fixture on the Cole show in the mid-twentieth century. Inspired initially by Professor Draper's publication on the same, Bob Kitchen has done a remarkable job of further unraveling and elaborating upon the life and career of one of James A. Bailey's handpicked performers, the lovely equestrian Rose Wentworth. From John Corson, we have an account of the Arthur Bros. Circus, giving special detail to the wagons and cars that carried the show in the 1940s. Finally, from CHS Board Member and auction organizer supreme, John Polacsek, we are given a fascinating look at a specific part of circus life outside the canvas top. John tracked down accounts of "baseball fever" and how the show people managed to pack fun into their transient lives.

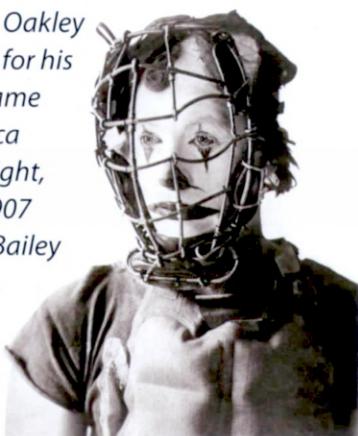
Along with the obvious contributions of our authors, the creation of this issue has once again been made possible through the remarkable patience and talents of John and Mardi Wells and Howard Pace. They have gone above and beyond to keep our publication on schedule and I am most grateful to them. Fred Dahlinger Jr. has been of great help in looking over several of our articles and giving useful context to the histories and images included in the issue. Fred Pfening III has once again been generous in sharing resources from his collection. And a final note of thanks goes to William "Buckles" Woodcock for his remarkable blog, which is a seemingly endless source of information and images that bring circus history to life. His contributions to our studies are impossible to count.

JLP



Left, Slivers Oakley in costume for his baseball game routine, circa 1907 and right, from the 1907 Barnum & Bailey route book.

The Ringling Museum



On the Cover

by Jennifer Lemmer Posey

This issue's front cover hosts a whimsical litho printed by Strobridge Lithographing Company for the 1913 Barnum & Bailey season, while the back cover shows an undated photo of elephants playing baseball. During the first decades of the twentieth century, circuses were particularly focused on incorporating seemingly unrelated trends in popular culture into the performances under the big top. From baseball to bicycles, American circuses filled their rings and stages with acts that featured novel props, people, and ideas that were shaping the national consciousness.

This interest in weaving cultural trends into performance can truly be traced to the very roots of circus performances. The basic equestrian arts were of especial interest to audiences because so many of them were familiar with the animals and how humans worked with them. Artists turning somersaults over the back of a galloping horse made the mundane magical. In the same way in 1906, acts like the daredevil Diavolo and the acrobatic Kaufmann Troupe made the increasingly common bicycle into something beyond the everyday. The automobile had barely been introduced to the public before it was used to leap "chasms" and loop the loops.



Innovations could be introduced through any act imaginable, but few big top performers were as flexible and accommodating as the elephants and the clowns. In the early 1900s America had the highest density of telephones to population of any nation – numbering about three million phones in 1904. The 1909 Ringling show responded to this new technology with the "Hello Elephants" demonstrating a modern switchboard and telephones.

Although baseball had been played in the United States long before, the first World Series games took place in 1903, and likely had some influence on the sudden surge of baseball fever tracked by John Polacsek in this issue. While the article studies how the national craze for the game fit into the daily lives of show people, there is also the story of how it was literally played out under the canvas. Circus performers incorporated the popular sport in a number of ways. Among the most popular, the one-man baseball game as performed by clown Frank "Slivers" Oakley, was said to bring down the house of the Barnum & Bailey circus by 1907.

Seeing a group of elephants play the game must have been enthralling to audiences for the Barnum & Bailey show. The combination of the grand, exotic animals and the familiar and exciting pastime made for a brilliant marketing hook.

According to an article published in the April 29, 1914

Washington Post, the elephants swung bats and threw balls with their trunks. The colorful press agent went on to declare that "As hitters, the big animals have Tyrus Raymond Cobb, Speaker, Jackson, and the rest of the celebrities 'beaten to a frazzle.'" The May 22, 1912 *New York Sun* detailed the specifics of the game with pitcher Rosie, catcher Jim, and batter Billy, ending the description with the lament "It's too bad the late Mr. Barnum couldn't have been on hand to see his show last night - he'd have sat up too!"

As time changed, so did the shows, baseball gave way to War Elephants in 1914 and by 1918 the pachyderms were playing football.

A Clown Remembers The Ringling Sleepers

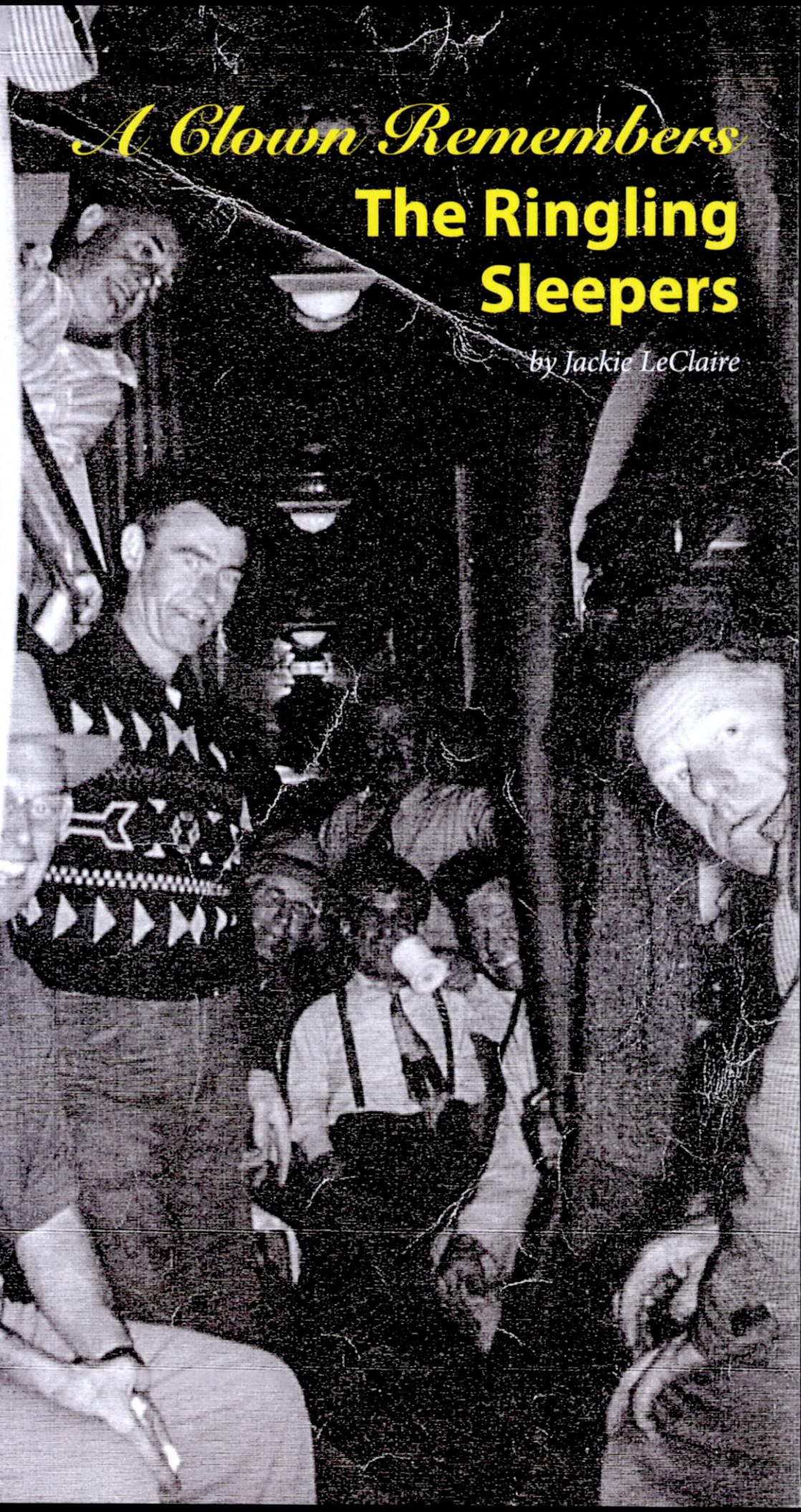
by Jackie LeClaire

On the Ringling show we lived in railway cars called coaches or sleeper cars. In the early 1940s they were wood coaches, the old U.S. hospital cars from the First World War. Around 1947 we got steel coaches – the hospital cars from the Second World War.

The sleeping cars had bunk bed berths two high. Unlike a Pullman car, they never turned into seats. They were made out of plywood and had standard 6 x 4 foot mattresses. You can imagine it did not leave much room for the aisle. It was very narrow. In *The Greatest Show on Earth* movie, they show the train. The first time the circus people ever saw the picture, they were in hysterics because we never had aisles like that. That was strictly cinema. In the lower berths you shared the berth unless one had some stardom or prestige like Lou Jacobs and Emmett Kelly. In that case you got a berth to yourself.

Inside a Ringling sleeper, 1947. Left side (top to bottom): Fred Hanlon, John Riley, and Jerry Bangs. Center (top to bottom, left to right) Unidentified, Myron Orton, Frankie Saluto, and Irv Romig. At right is Lou Jacobs.

Author's collection



Now, if you were a kid like me (in 1944 I was 16 – actually a First of May), well then you had to share a berth with somebody. If you knew somebody you could go to the personnel manager and say “Pat [Valdo], I want to sleep with Jim or George” and you got a berth with someone that you knew. If you didn’t, they just pulled a name out of the hat and that was it.

The upper berths were single. My father had an upper berth, Dutch Lully and other older, established clowns got the upper berths. If you happened to be in an upper berth, there was a ladder, but no one used it. You stepped on the lower berth, grabbed the upper pipe rail that held the upper curtain and pulled yourself up. You had to be careful not to step on a hand or even the face of the guy sleeping in the lower berth. It was all part of living in the sleeper.

In the berths we did have windows that lifted up so at least you could get some fresh air. The upper berths had small windows like in a trolley. They opened out. Unfortunately you could not leave them open while the train was moving because the black soot would come in and cover the sheets and beds.

The only privacy you had for the entire year was when you closed the curtain that went across the entire berth. That was it. We did not have a sergeant at arms but there would always be some cranky clown that would stick his head out of the curtain and grumble with a dirty look that quieted everything down. It was a self-ruled system.

Every coach had a porter. All coaches were numbered. I was in a car which some of the established clowns shared with the musicians. The porter made the bed and changed the sheets and we paid him a little something each week. Now around the circus, you pay for everything where one working man helps you. Most of them were very low salaried and the only way they made any more was through tips.

At each end of the car was a small vestibule that had a few seats and two wash basins. On the performers' end they had a very small galley where the porter had a small propane stove and an ice box. The porter would cook small foods, make sandwiches, and sell beer. It was illegal of course, as beer was not supposed to be moved over state lines because of licenses. That never seemed to be a problem when I was there as it was only sold to the people on the show. No outsiders. When you went to the platform where the trains were joined together there would be the doniker. Toilet to the common folk. The next adjoining car often had the same, only on the opposite side so that you

could go up the steps on one side and down the steps to get off on the other side.

My good friend, contortionist and aerialist Kathy Kramer, told me later that she was scared to death of going to the doniker during the night as they rarely ever had the metal floors down and the open stairs were just waiting to take you down with one good jerk of the train. You learned to hang on the metal holders of the car. On regular passenger cars, the steps come up and they put up a rail, even closing the doors on long jumps.

I always remember that when you came into the train at night you had to run the gauntlet. There were seats for about eight and some standing around, waiting for a sandwich from the porter or a sipping a bottle of beer. There was no other way to get into the sleeper except slipping through the group as they cut up jackpots.

The first year I was with Ringling Bros. I slept with a very famous man. I shared a bunk with Gunther Wallenda, Herman Wallenda's son and part of the famous Wallenda family. Gunther and I became really good friends. We had met at Winter Quarters and in New York before we ever got on the train.

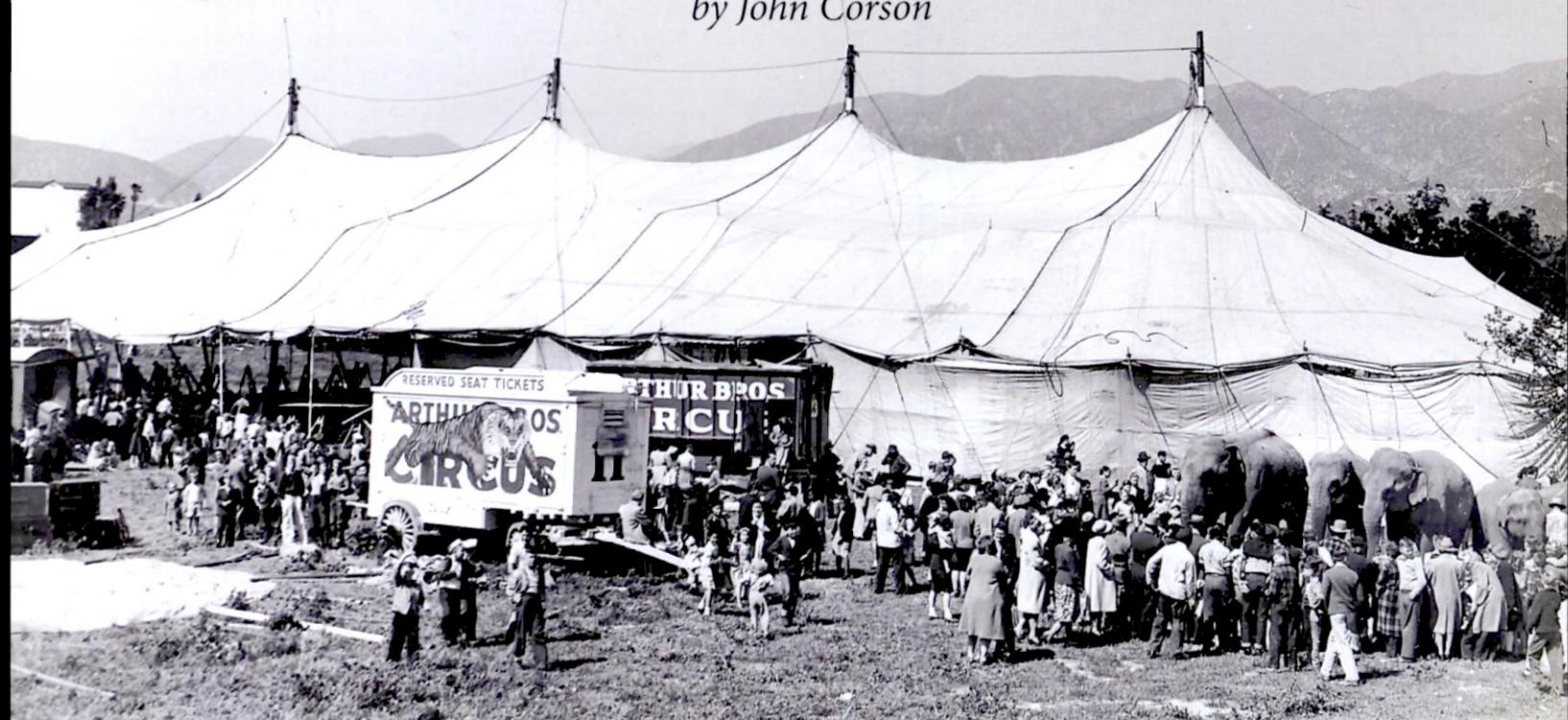
Gunther was on the wire when the Wallendas fell during the Seven Man Pyramid in Detroit. He did not fall and even was able to hold one of the other performers. Two people were killed and one, Mario Wallenda, was paralyzed that day.

Later, when the family was putting the pyramid together for a return, CBS came to film the event. The wire was set up in the yard of the Wallenda home on Arlington Street in Sarasota. It was only about 12 feet from the ground, but as the pyramid approached the center of the wire, the weight of the seven people and the heavy balancing poles was too much and the wire pulled out of its stakes and everyone came down in a heap. Gunther lost about all of his teeth and after that, his wife Sheila said “that's enough.” I guess Gunther felt the same. He quit and went to college and became a Civics major, going on to teach the course at Sarasota High School.

Occasionally Gunther would invite me to some of the school affairs. One time I was talking to the principal and Gunther was in a group nearby. The principal asked “How well do you know Gunther?” Knowing Gunther could hear my reply, I casually answered “Oh, I know Gunther very well. We slept together one year.” It was easily explained and was all in fun. **Bw**

ARTHUR BROS. CIRCUS

by John Corson



This is an overview of the short history of the Arthur Bros. Circus and its equipment. The show was first conceived of by Martin Arthur in 1942 when the carnival that his side-show was traveling with, folded.

Martin Arthur was a well-recognized carnival producer who was at the height of his career when he undertook the tricky business of traveling his own circus in the mid-1940s. Born in Seattle, Washington in 1910, Chauncey Perry Byam changed his name to Martin Ernest Arthur and had embarked on a career in traveling entertainments by 1930. By the time he was thirty, Arthur was married to Dolores Berry and he was listed in the 1940 census as the owner of a sideshow touring with the World's Fair Shows and Coe Bros. Circus Combined.

When George Coe decided to fold-up his show, Arthur went to Las Vegas where he augmented his equip-

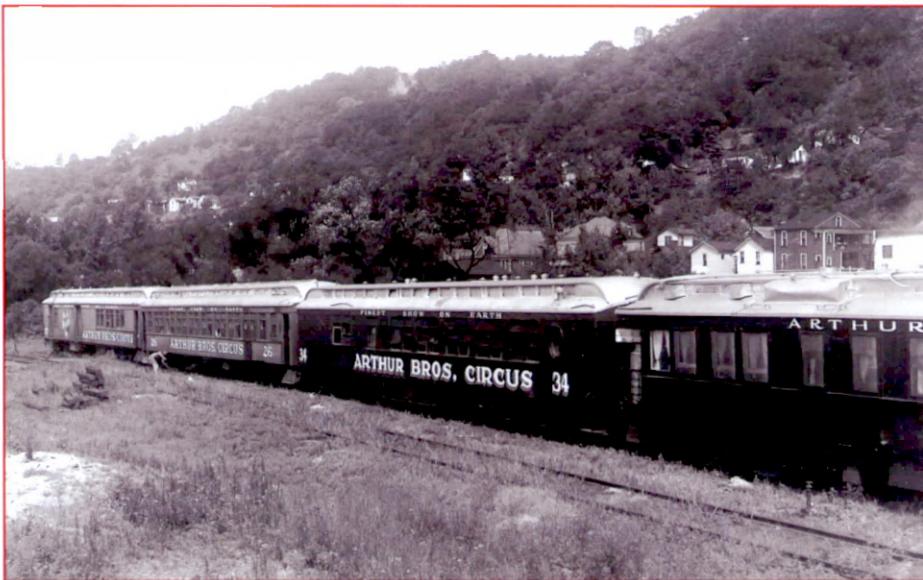
Arthur Bros. big top, 1945

Courtesy of Buckles Blog

ment with purchases from Bud Anderson and reframed his sideshow into the Arthur Bros. Circus. The show finished the year with phenomenal success and returned to its winter quarters at Venice, California. There Arthur re-built the seats and added a larger big top (the old one became the menagerie top) and otherwise generally enlarged the show for the 1943 season. A Mills Brothers type, canvas-loader semi-trailer truck was first used this season with a cab-over tractor pulling it. The tractor gave out before the season was over, but generally the season was profitable. The July 24, 1943 issue of *Billboard* reported Arthur Bros. Circus' great success in Los Angeles; playing to over 50,000 people during their five day stand. For 1944 Arthur went all out with newer, heavier trucks and bigger tents. The big top, a 120

with 3 forties was outstanding, white with stars and stripes at the peak. The canvas-loader trailer was replaced with a straight semi-trailer. The show was in the major truck class and was very successful.

Martin, an ambitious 34 year old decided to go to the rails in 1945. Paul Eagles was commissioned to get together the rail show equipment at the Baldwin Park Winter Quarters in January of 1945. The trucks were sold off except for the 1943 canvas-loader trailer which was converted to a wagon; later the poles had to be shortened because they would not go under rail underpasses. The pole trailer which was also converted to a wagon with the addition of a new front under carriage (replacing the fifth wheels). Starting off in California it was a ten car show- two stock, three passenger



The short passenger car, #34, in Wheeling, West Virginia, 1945

Courtesy of The Ringling Museum, Tibbals Collection

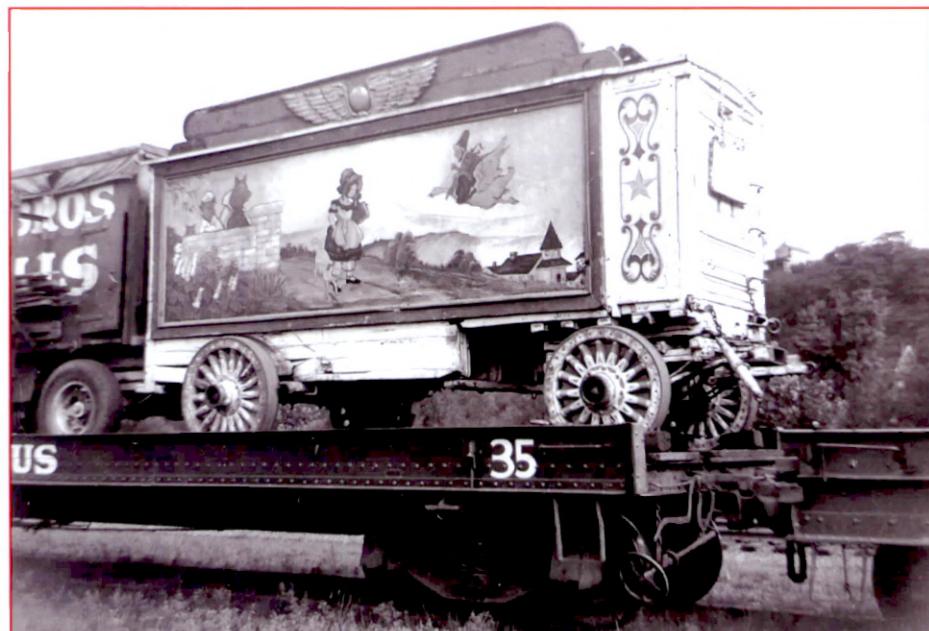
cars, five flats; many rail cars not yet painted. One Warren type stock and one Mt. Vernon flat car came from a defunct Nevada railroad and were supposed to have been former Al G. Barnes cars. One long 80 foot stock with double doors had been used by an airplane manufacturer to haul wings from plant to plant. A private car from the Conklin Carnival was occupied by Arthur, his wife, and baby son. Since the remaining two passenger cars could not hold all the working men, they were bunked in the end of the stock cars, hence the small windows in one end. The two passenger cars built by ACF came from the Alabama, Tennessee and Northern railroad and unlike the other passenger cars, had eastern type four wheel instead of six wheel trucks. Two system flats, one about 60 feet, long resembling a Warren car, built from two flat cars welded end to end and another, about 72 feet long (apparently a cut down stock car) were leased from the Foley Burke Carnival. The shorter one was still in use until Foley & Burke left the rails. One Mt. Vernon flat (ex-Hagenbeck) came

from Howard Bary in New Jersey. Two other strange long flats were created by cutting down box cars used by Captain Hutton's Pacific Whaling Company for traveling whale exhibits. They could not handle the weight of loaded wagons and had to have turnbuckles added under the deck and frame. A seventh and last flat was a leased system flat

with steel gunnels added, resembling in use a Mt. Vernon car. This car and another short passenger car #34 which were added to accommodate the chain drive Macks which had been driven overland, did not join the show until Portland, Oregon.

This totals seven flats, two stocks, and four passenger cars. Since Arthur was now paying to transport fifteen cars, he added another, the all-steel advance car which did not join the show until Great Falls, Montana, after two months of the season had passed. Previously an old 1930s vintage humpback Dodge panel truck was used by the advance. The show was the last old-time circus with chain drive Macks and mostly steel tired wagon wheels.

The wagons all came from Louis Goebel's Jungle Compound and with the exception of the two cross-cages (originally on Christy and Robbins) were ex-Hagenbeck wagons. The two cross-cages came from the Cole Bros. and were traded to Goebel for two large Hagenbeck cages because of wagons lost in the Cole winter



The Mother Goose-Bo Peep tableau in Wheeling, West Virginia, 1945

Courtesy of The Ringling Museum, Tibbals Collection

quarters fire in 1940. The Hagenbeck steel-tired wagons included the ex-Sells Floto - Hagenbeck ticket wagon, now restored at the Circus World Museum. Also at the Museum is the reserved ticket wagon, the Charging Tiger wagon, which originated on the John Robinson show in the 1920s before moving to Hagenbeck-Wallace. The Mother Goose-BoPeep tab, part of the Hagenbeck picture side set that was painted by clown Emmett Kelly, was used as a trunk and chair wagon. Three rubber-tired Springfield wagons built for the 1938 Hagenbeck season were on the show. One, #66, was the light plant and had been reconverted to a wagon after being converted to a truck trailer on previous truck shows. The upper structure was gone, replaced with angle irons. The light plant had also been on Jimmy Wood's 101 Ranch Show and Bud Anderson's Show converted to a semi-trailer. The other two Springfield wagons, #17 and #23, were twins except for length and had closed



Wagon #18 had been converted to carry dogs and costumes, 1945.

Courtesy of The Ringling Museum, Tibbals Collection

tops added by Arthur to allow for carrying concessions and props. The Hagenbeck refrigerator wagon was used for the cook house and loaded the tables and poles on the sides. One other unusual wagon, #18, was originally a giraffe wagon intended for two baby giraffes that had died. Hagenbeck had converted it to carry dogs in the front and costumes in the back. Two chain drive Macks with water tanks

provided motive power. The one with two oval tanks stacked did not last long. The train teams consisted of a two horse hitch and an elephant hitch for Babe. A Cat tractor model 30 was carried on a small Springfield wagon that was built for Hagenbeck for that purpose. The show also had a little three wheel stake driver.

An ex-clown police patrol wagon was used to carry the lighting equipment, but did not last long because it had 2 fixed axles. There were two large Hagenbeck cages, the two arch wagon carried goats inside and the three arch carried lions and a leopard. Bud Anderson's ex-wife had concessions and sold Arthur the six elephants - four large and two small - Shirley, Gentry Babe, Wilhelmina, Vera, Bunta, and Inda worked by Cheerful Gardner. The show also had two camels and two water buffalo. Walter Jennier with his straight truck and Jorgen Christiansen and Ken Maynard with their horses in semis drove overland.

The show had much competition in the west with Art Concello's Russell Brothers Railroader who said that Arthur's show was a grift show and Arthur suffered bad business. The big top suffered two blowdowns and they finished the season using the menag-



The three arch cage wagon, 1945

Courtesy of The Ringling Museum, Tibbals Collection



Terrell Jacobs cages on the flats in Wheeling, West Virginia, 1945

Courtesy of The Ringling Museum, Tibbals Collection

erie top (a small 70 with two 30s and a 40) for the big top and side-walling the menagerie.

Terrell Jacobs joined at Fort Wayne, Indiana, with two Pennsylvania Railroad flats carrying his cages, but quit when they kept dumping his cages over the sides of the flats. The show tried to get to the east coast looking for better business, but only got as far as Wheeling, West Virginia. They played on Wheeling Island, but unloaded in Bridgeport, Ohio, where they dumped Jacobs' cat cage again. Jacobs left in Marietta, Ohio, and Ken Maynard left a little later so the show lost its two major draws.

Arthur then hurried across the South to its final stand in Phoenix, Arizona - broke. Arthur apparently paid for his 500 mile jump home to Baldwin Park, California by selling the two lions, the leopard and the cage to a zoo in Phoenix. That three arch cage ended up at the Circus World Museum. Since Arthur arrived home broke and had leased most of the equipment, he left it on a siding for Louis Goebel and the other owners to pick up. Arthur then went back to the carnival business.

Goebel tried to sell the equipment to Clyde Beatty, but it was too rundown and he finally sold some of off piece-meal. The train was left on a Pacific Electric siding with the two horse train team hitched to the empty cat wagon, and the dogs still in the dog wagon. Performer trunks were just thrown

on the ground. Clyde Beatty did buy the Springfield wagon that carried the Cat; he used it to haul his arena until he closed on rails in 1956.

Passenger cars #34 and #26 ended up on Royal American, but were junked in the 1950s. Three flats went to The World of Mirth, but none of these ended up at the Circus World Museum. The long stock, private car, and combine #77 went to Sam Huston. The long stock was later on Hennis Brothers. The other Arthur stock car ended up on Dailey Brothers. The leased flats went back to Foley and Burke and the railroad. One Mt. Vernon flat went to Clyde Beatty and one whale flat to Cole Brothers where they remained until those shows closed on rails. After the rail cars were gone, the wagons remained at track side until a grass fire in the spring destroyed the #6 cook house wagon, the #71 Mother-Goose Bo-Peep tab, and several baggage wagons, scorching the Charging Tiger ticket wagon and the



The Springing Tiger ticket wagon, 1945

Courtesy of The Ringling Museum, Tibbals Collection

dog wagon. Goebel took the rest back to his Jungle Compound where he used them for movie rentals, including movies such as *Big Circus* with Vic Mature as the owner of the Whirling Circus and *Jumbo* with Jimmy Durante. The Springfield wagons #17 and #23 were in the movie *Three Ring Circus* with Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis which was made on the Clyde Beatty Railroad Show. When they went back to the studio to shoot, they did not have the Beatty wagons so #17 and #23 filled in, being lettered Clyde Brent Circus. Some of the Hagenbeck wagons used on Arthur Bros., including the one cross cage, were destroyed in the wreck scene in the movie *The Greatest Show on Earth*. Finally many of the wagons were in the movie *Water for Elephants*.

The tarp covered car on the train was Martin Arthur's, by its shape it was probably a Chrysler. Seven of the Arthur Brothers wagons have ended up at the Circus World Museum in Baraboo. Ticket wagons #40 and #11, wagon #47, and the little cross cage. The three arch cage was acquired from



The #40 ticket wagon, 1945

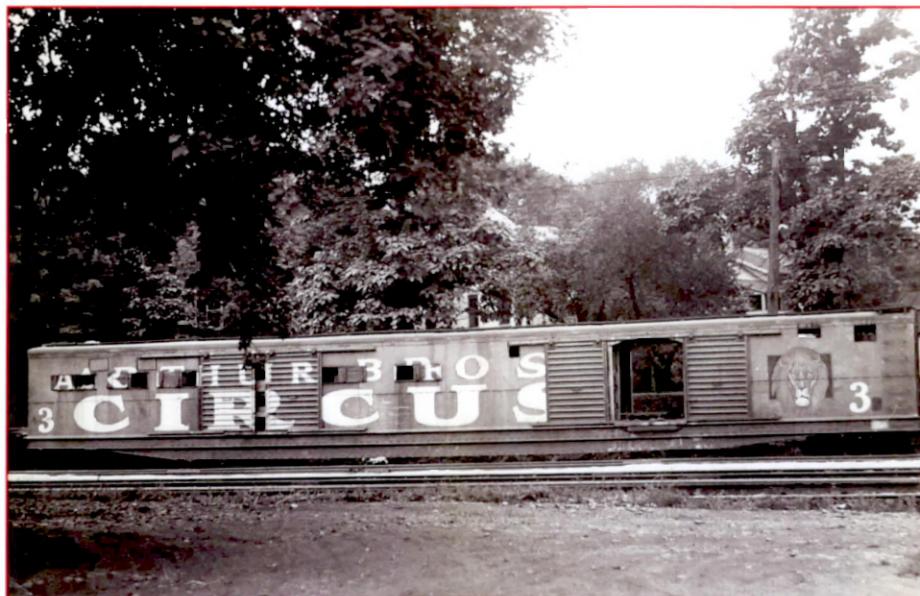
Courtesy of The Ringling Museum, Tibbals Collection

the Phoenix Zoo. Also Springfield wagons #17 and #23 were acquired after Louis Goebel died.

Following the 1945 season, Martin Arthur went back in the carnival business eventually with the notable Imperial Exposition Shows. He sold that carnival, after taking it to Hawaii, and then owned sideshows and one-in-ones. Arthur retired to Tucson, Arizona in the 1950s, where he contracted

Alzheimer's, and died in 1989.

Although the Arthur Bros. only traveled three seasons, it was noted for its quality. The April 7, 1945 *Billboard* review wrote "Arthur Bros., on the rails for the first time, is a classy little show." Even amongst the show people who traveled with it, the circus was remembered fondly. Walter Jennier said that it was a good show and a fun show to be on. **BW**



The #3 stock car had once been used to haul airplane wings, 1945.

Courtesy of The Ringling Museum, Tibbals Collection

A note from the author

After 40 years of discussions with people who knew Martin Arthur, performers, and people who had seen the show and those doing research, I need to thank the following and if I have missed anyone, I apologize. Hopefully, this article contains the known information about Martin Arthur, his circus, equipment and their disposition. Thanks to information provided by Joe Bradbury, F. W. Gresham, Bob Taber, Harry Quillian, Don Smith, Joe Rettinger, Fred Dahlinger, Fred Pfening, Jr., Doc Hayden, Tom Parkinson, Bill Curtin, Walter Janier, Michael Sperrer, Stuart Thayer and many others.

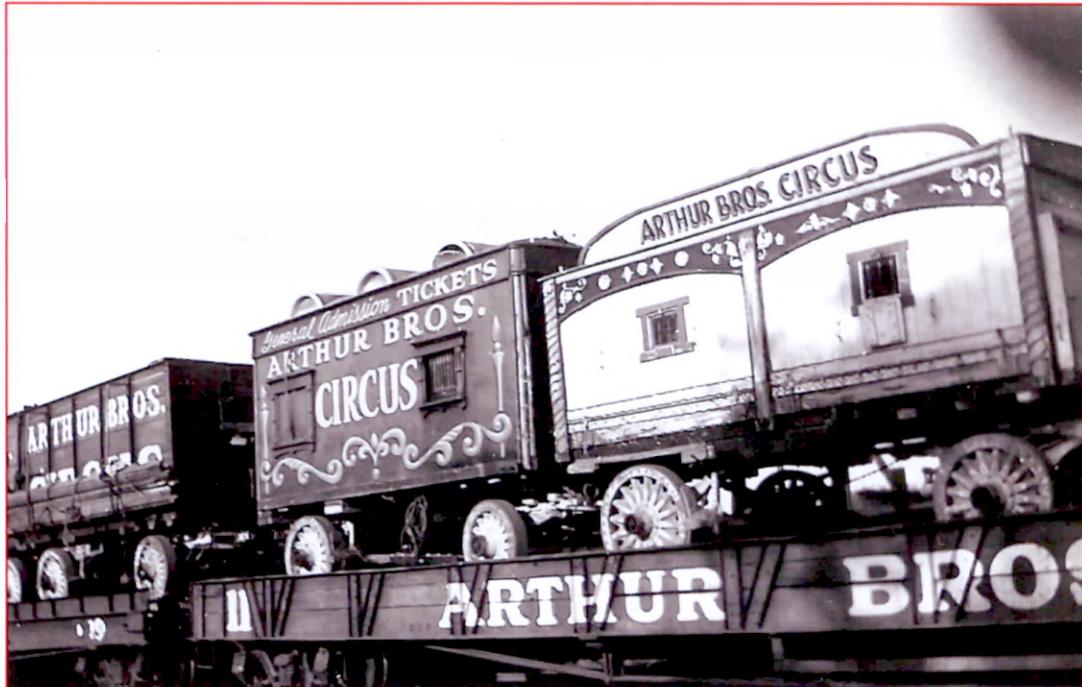
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Joseph T. Bradbury, "Circus Wagon History File," *Bandwagon*, Jul/Aug 1963 (Vol 7, No. 4), 16-17.

John Corson, "Arthur Bros.," *Little Circus Wagon*, Dec/Jan 1972.



The two arch cage wagon on the train, 1945

Courtesy of The Ringling Museum, Tibbals Collection



Arthur Bros. poster, 1945

Courtesy of The Ringling Museum, Tibbals Collection

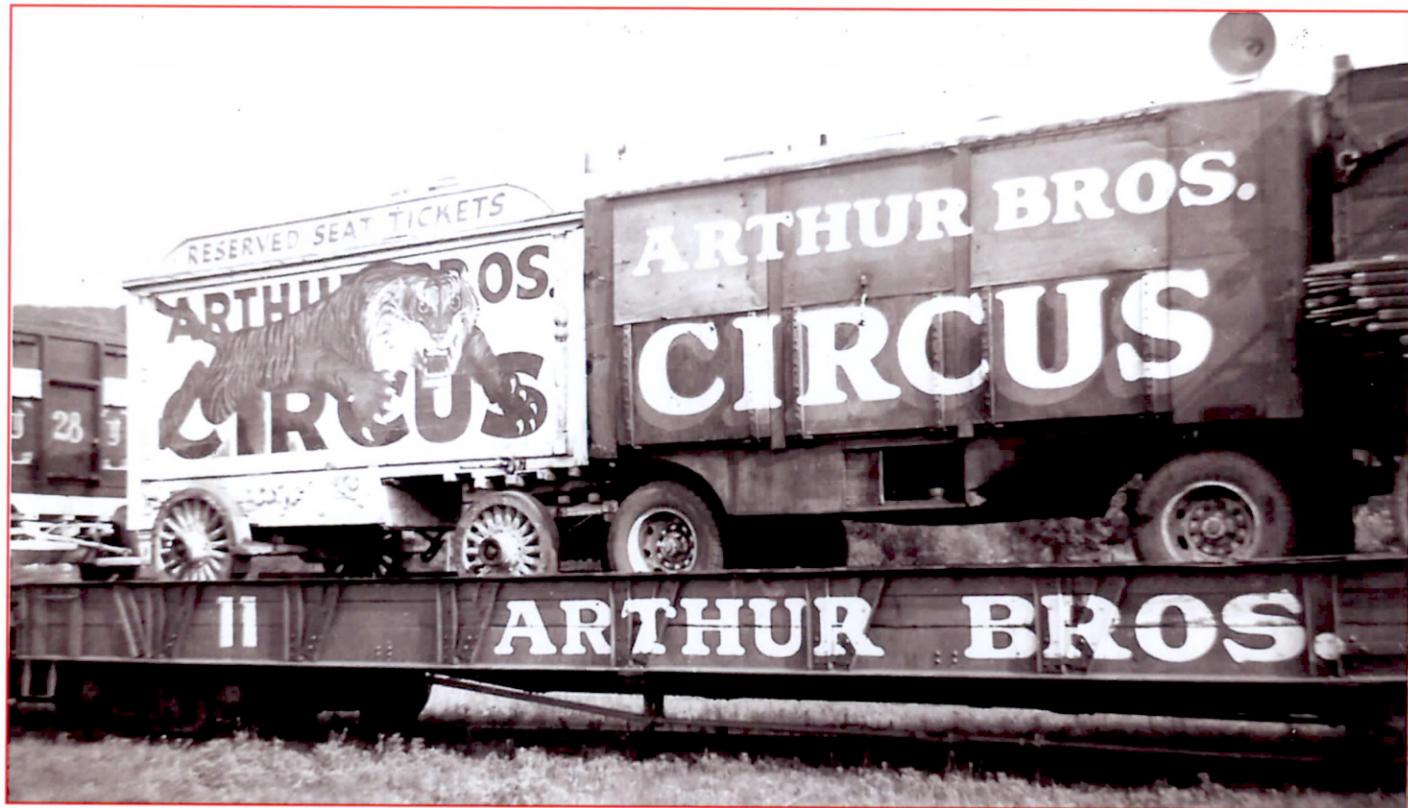


Scenes from the 1945 season of the Arthur Bros. Circus

The Ringling Museum, Tibbals Collection



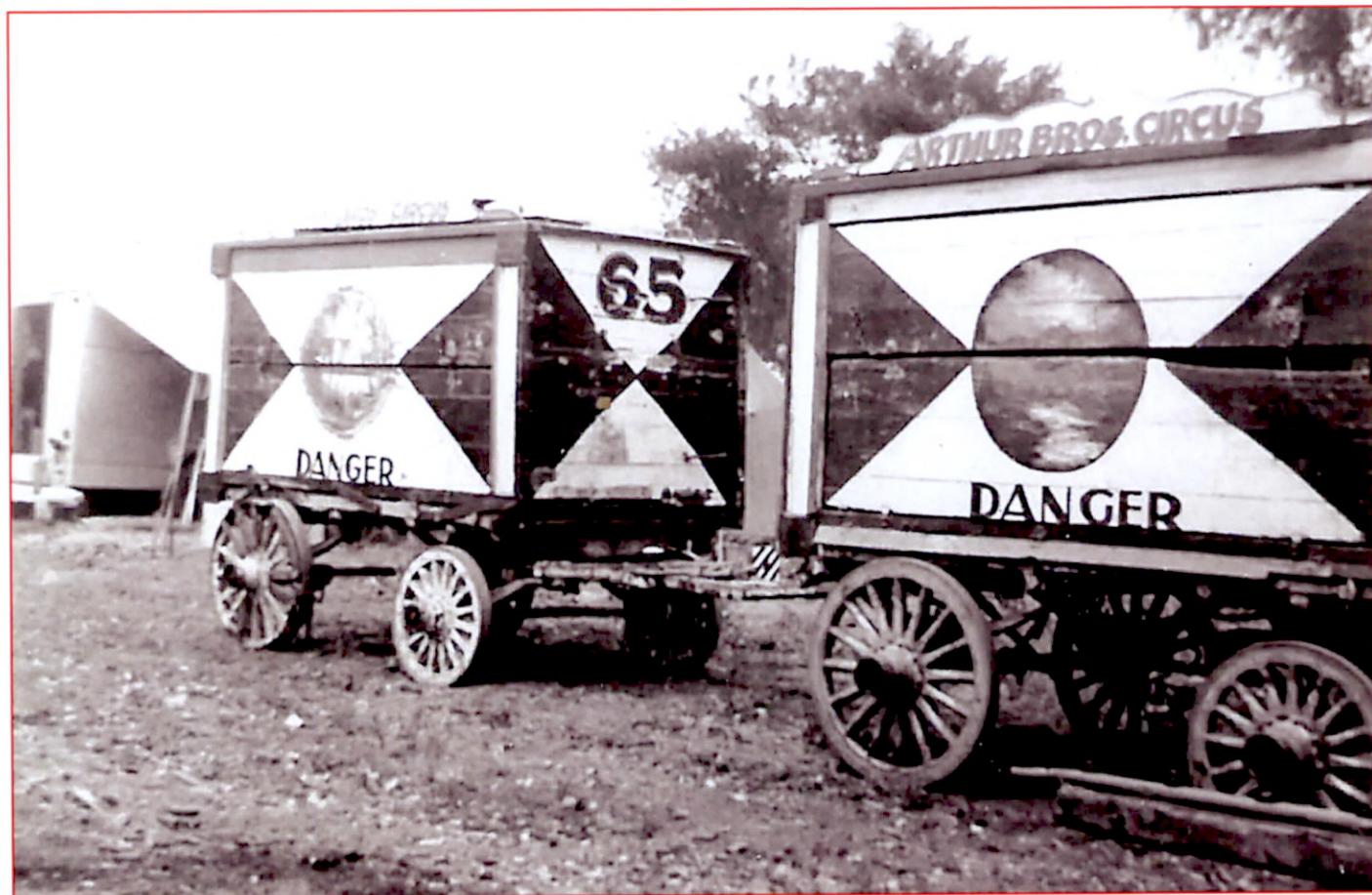
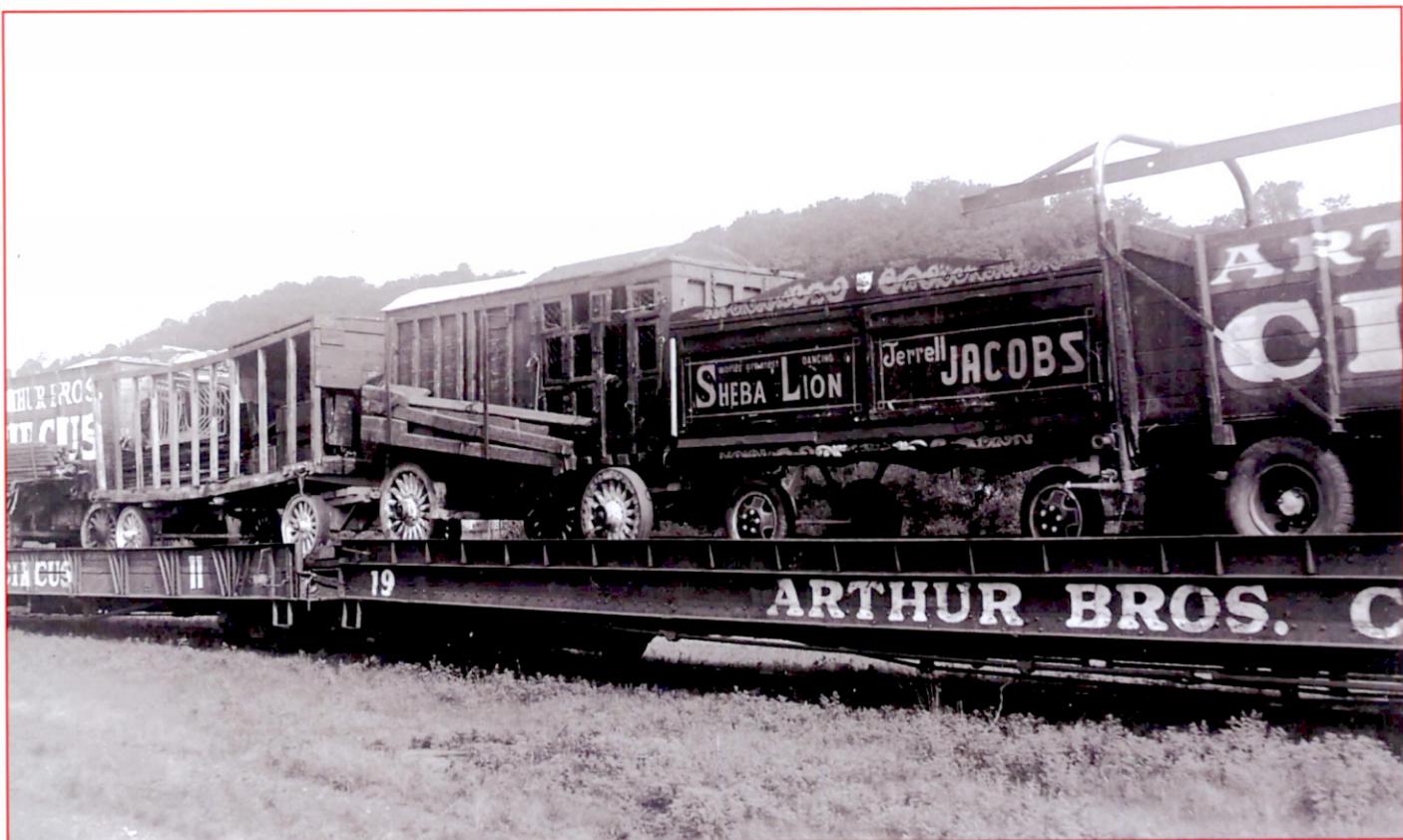




More from the 1945 season of the Arthur Bros. Circus

The Ringling Museum, Tibbals Collection





Rose Wentworth

A Rose by Any Other Name

by Robert Kitchen



Rose Wentworth, circa 1900

Author's collection

"He is Punchinello and she sweet Columbine. He is Punchinello still, but sweet Columbine has given up all her past life for love and Punchinello and she is now pretty Rose Wentworth, who in trig habit, dashes madly around the course at Madison Square Garden in a jockey race, drives a chariot, swings on a trapeze from a giddy height, or bends her body into impossible postures as she slips through a small ring."¹

So wrote a *New York Times* reporter as he interviewed Rose in the ladies dressing room in Madison Square Garden in 1895. This was the first of several interviews that Rose would give in her circus career. Rose did all of those things listed, but she was yet to reach the zenith of her professional career.

Rose's story starts in Fall River, Massachusetts where she was born Rose Maud Allington on March 21, 1874.² Fall River, recognized by that time as the textile capital of America, was growing rapidly. The city attracted a large number of British immigrants who came to work in the mills. Her father, Charles Allington, came to America as a young man prior to 1874. Census records show that his wife Mary was born in Massachusetts, so the assumption is that Charles was married in America. In an interview Rose claims that her father returned with his family to England when she was five years old. What her father's occupation was is unclear but it was not unusual for immigrants to return to the old country. Poor pay and long hours or simply homesickness caused many to return home. The Allingtons settled in London and at age eight, Rose began dancing lessons. In 1887 she obtained a position as a dancer in a production of Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*. She would have been only twelve or thirteen when hired.³

In the fall of 1889, James Bailey took the Barnum show to London, opening at the Olympia on November 11, 1889 and closing on February 15, 1890. Before leaving London, Bailey posted a call for ballet girls for his planned 1890 spec *Nero*. Rose Maud Allington was one of those British girls answering the call. The call was for girls sixteen and older and Rose was sixteen by the time the Barnum show opened in America for the 1890 season. Bailey was also seeking replacements for some of the young ladies who had graced the Hall of Illusions in the 1899 season. Bailey brought this so-called black tent show to the London stand. It proved to be a hit in the 1889 season and he would again feature it during the 1890 season. (See Polacsek, *Bandwagon* July/August 2012). Bailey was looking for young ladies fair in face and form, and Rose fit the bill. She was hired to portray Magneta, Goddess of the Seas in the Black Tent Illusions



in 1890. She would portray Magneta for only this one season.⁴

In one interview, Rose tells a story of James Bailey pairing her up with Harry Wentworth, a noted clown that had been on the Barnum show since 1884. In addition to clowning, Harry worked with animals, primarily pigs, and did a contortion act. Rose claimed that Bailey said that Harry would be her protector on the show.⁵ There is some validity to this claim as Rose and Harry had a close association from the start of their relationship. He was nearly twenty years her senior.⁶

Rose first appears in the 1890 Barnum & Bailey route book. She is listed under her maiden name, Maud Allington. The book lists her as a ballet girl in the *Nero* company, Magneta Goddess of the Seas in the black tent illusions, and as a lady jockey in the big show. This was not bad for a girl who came to the show with only a few years of dance training.⁷

The 1891 season would see Harry and Maud moved to the Forepaugh show. Perhaps Bailey saw something in Maud that could be developed and sent her to the smaller show to work with Harry as her mentor. Here Harry taught her trapeze and contortion. In an 1896 interview Rose talked about learning how to drive a chariot and how the horses nearly pulled her arms out. She also talked about the difficulty in learning contortion and called the work very hard and bone breaking, but now could do just about any act in the show. Here she claims that she married Harry in 1890, which would make her sixteen when married.⁸

1892 would again find Harry and Maud on the Forepaugh show. They presented a contortion act, billed as "charming contortion by Harry Wentworth and Miss Allington." Harry here gets top billing. A *New York Clipper* article lists them as Harry Wentworth and wife, contortionists, but the show billing does not infer that they were married. Rose did claim in an interview that she was only fourteen when she was married, but told Harry she was sixteen in fear that he wouldn't marry her. This is nonsense. In any case, Harry and Maud had developed a first class contortion act which they would take on the vaudeville circuit for many years to come. Vaudeville was a great outlet for circus acts and provided much needed work in the off season.

1893 saw the couple finishing their Forepaugh careers and moving to the big show. We see the name Rose used for the first time this year.⁹ The program lists in center ring

Barnum & Bailey's Black Tent, circa 1890

The Ringling Museum, Tibbals Collection

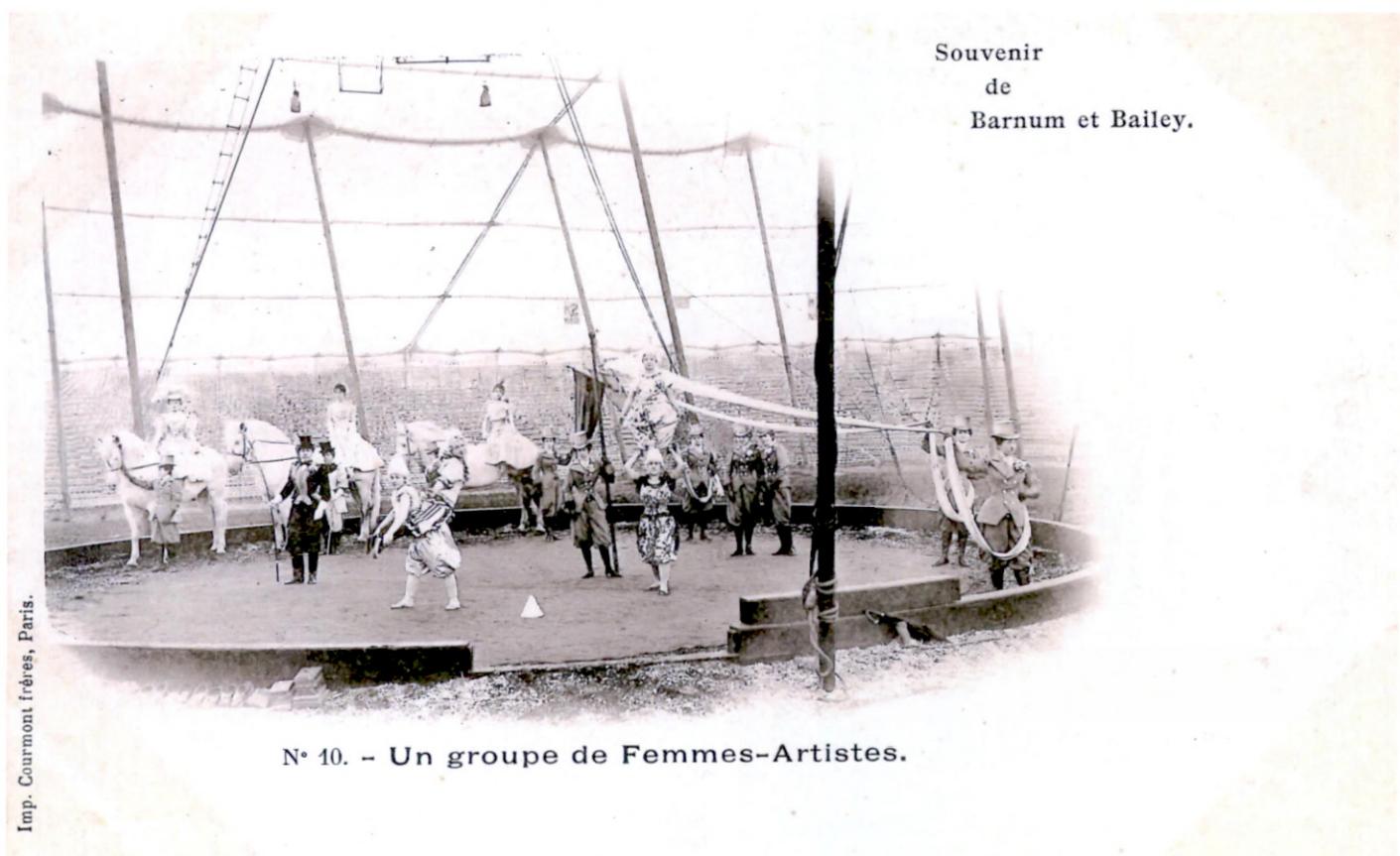
Rose Wentworth charming contortionist assisted by Harry Wentworth. Rose gets top billing. Maud Allington continues to be listed in the route book as a jockey rider. This, of course, was Rose using her maiden name. A rather interesting note appears in the *Clipper* this year stating that Rose Wentworth is changing her name to Victoria, but no evidence is found that she ever performed under that name.¹⁰

1894 marked the return of the Wentworths to the Barnum show. This would be the beginning of a long run on the Barnum & Bailey show for the Wentworths. Harry and Rose would continue their contortion act, with Rose doing a single trap act in the fourth display, center ring of the 1894 program. Harry also does clowning and his pig act. Maud continues to be listed in the route book as doing contortion, single trap, a carrying act and races.¹¹ It was in 1894 that Rose purchased a large seventeen room house in Willow Grove, Pennsylvania in what is now the township of Abington. Her father moved his family back to America in 1893 and Rose purchased the house for them.¹²

The *Clipper* in 1895 again mentions Rose doing contortion with Harry helping out. The act is billed as refined contortion by Maud Allington and Harry Wentworth. Here again Rose uses her maiden name for the contortion act.

Why the return to the Maud Allington name? Rose had been training as an equestrienne and she does appear as a principal rider for the first time. It seems that Rose uses her married name when she appears as an equestrian and her maiden name when she does the less prestigious contortion act. The Maud Allington name would disappear shortly after this season. The 1895 show was heavy with riding acts among whom were Showles, William Wallet, Ernest Melville, the Meers sisters, Linda Jeal, Josie Ashton, Rose Wentworth, and Mlle. Castroni.¹³ Rose had finally broken into this talented group of riders.

The 1896 route book lists the Meers sisters, Josie Ashton, and Rose as lady riders, Rose being listed third. In the previously quoted 1896 newspaper article Rose told of her training for the various turns that she did. She also stated that she spent her spare time working on her riding act. The article mentions the fact that Rose came to the show only six years before as a neophyte and now is an accomplished performer. Rose would spend a good portion of the winter off season at the ring barn in the Bridgeport winter quarters working on a new trick, a somersault on the back of a galloping horse. Reports speak of her working with a mechanic and throwing seventy somersaults per day.¹⁴



A postcard featuring Barnum & Bailey's Lady Riders, Clowns, and Ring Mistresses, circa 1897

The Ringling Museum, Tibbals Collection



Barnum & Bailey poster featuring Rose Wentworth, circa 1900

The Ringling Museum, Tibbals Collection

By spring she had mastered the trick and was ready to return to the Barnum show. This would make Rose among the earliest female performers to accomplish this feat, the first being fellow Philadelphian Mollie Brown.¹⁵ The Wentworths post an ad in *Billboard* which carries a photo of Rose calling her "America's Favorite Equestrienne". Harry is billed as a clown with the greatest troupe of trained pigs on earth. The ad states that their acts had been reengaged for the 1897 season. The claim of favorite equestrienne is a big one especially with the likes of Josie Ashton and the Meers sisters on the scene. By the end of the 1897 season, Rose would indeed be the premier rider on the Barnum show. Her act would draw many favorable comments as the show moved along its route. An April *Clipper* column states the following:

"Rose Wentworth, Rose and Ouika Meers and Josie Ashton, all met with generous applause for their clever, graceful riding. Miss Wentworth winning an extra share of approval for turning somersaults on the back of her horse. This display in three rings was made more prominent by having women ring masters, Miss Jessie Villars (her American debut in the circus ring), Jessie Olschansky and Lizzie Siebert as clowns."

Was this a nineteenth century version of women's rights?¹⁶

An August newspaper column would write under the title "Women in the Circus," "Women have demonstrated their ability to do anything a man can do, except perhaps cook...In the new Barnum & Bailey show the new woman proves her athletic ability with her old time tyrant, man."

Rose Wentworth, who began life as an actress does a new bareback act never attempted by a women. It is the forward and backward somersaults at a gallop. William Schoules [Showles], who is the acknowledged star of the bareback world can do nothing more. There is scarcely a line of acrobatic business in which women do not appear and in which they do not equal or excel their male companions...."¹⁷

Rose had risen to preeminence among the lady riders, commanding a lithograph of her own as the only woman



A postcard for Wentworth while performing with the Swiss National Circus, circa 1903

Author's Collection

throwing a somersault on the back of a horse, yet it is interesting to note that the only act to perform in the center ring with no acts in rings one and three was Rose Meers. The *Clipper* did report that Rose suffered a knee injury that kept her out of the program for a period of time. In the meantime, Harry continued clowning and presenting his trained pigs. He also did an act with a single elephant. Harry and Rose also did a contortion act with Rose using the Maud Allington name. Why would Rose continue to use her maiden name for this act? Perhaps it is because Rose considered herself an equestrienne first, the top of the circus caste system. Using the Maud Allington name was reserved for the less prestigious contortion act.

At the conclusion of the 1897 season, Bailey took his circus to England. He established a winter quarters in Stoke-on-Trent, and opened at the Olympia in London in late December. He spent 1898 and 1899 touring England and Scotland and using the Stoke-on-Trent site to winter the show for both years. The show spent the 1900 season touring Germany and Austria, wintering in Vienna. In 1901 the show played Hungary, Holland, Germany and Belgium, wintering in Paris. In 1902 the show played France and Switzerland. Rose was one of the stars of the show. Her 1897 lithograph of the only woman somersaulting on the back of a horse was translated into German and French, and was used during the tour. At the end of the season, the show returned to Bridgeport, but the Wentworths did not.

Harry and Rose signed a contract for the 1903 season with the Grand Cirque National Suisse. The show played Switzerland as well as a number of nearby countries. Souvenir photos show Rose in what appears to be contortionist attire, several photos in gowns in various dance positions and she on the back of a horse. One of the dance photos mentions her doing the then popular Cakewalk. Evidently, in addition to her bareback act, Rose did contortion and danced. The many turns of the Wentworths made them a bargain. They returned from Europe in late fall and posted a notice in the *Clipper* saying that they just completed a successful tour with the Swiss show including a testimonial from the manager of the show recommending the Wentworths.¹⁸ The Wentworths were a first class act and they knew how to sell themselves. Also mentioned was that they would take the winter off to develop new turns for the 1904 season.

One of the new turns developed over the winter of 1903-1904 was an English cart act. The act was developed by Harry and of course Rose was the star of the act. The act could be tailored for the vaudeville stage or the circus ring.

It was performed by what was billed as the Rose Wentworth trio. The trio included Harry and Fred Derrick. The climax of the act was when Rose threw a somersault from the cart to the back of the moving horse. The following is a description of the act.

"...Miss Wentworth's name is conspicuous in circus annals, and there are no other women equestriennes that excel her in graceful and daring feats, either bareback or saddle. The act is conducted in the spectacular way that throws such glamour around riding acts in the circus. There is a grand entrance, in which Miss Wentworth appears in a magnificent trap, drawn by a beautiful white horse, accompanied by her assistant and footman. From this point there follows a series of splendidly performed feats, terminating with a clever double equestrian bareback exhibition."¹⁹

The Wentworths tested the new act during the winter when they played the Keith circuit. They post a notice in the *Clipper* that said that the act was pronounced by all managers as the best act they had ever seen. Also stated was that they would return to the Barnum & Bailey show for the 1905 season where they would perform all of their usual turns plus the cart act.²⁰

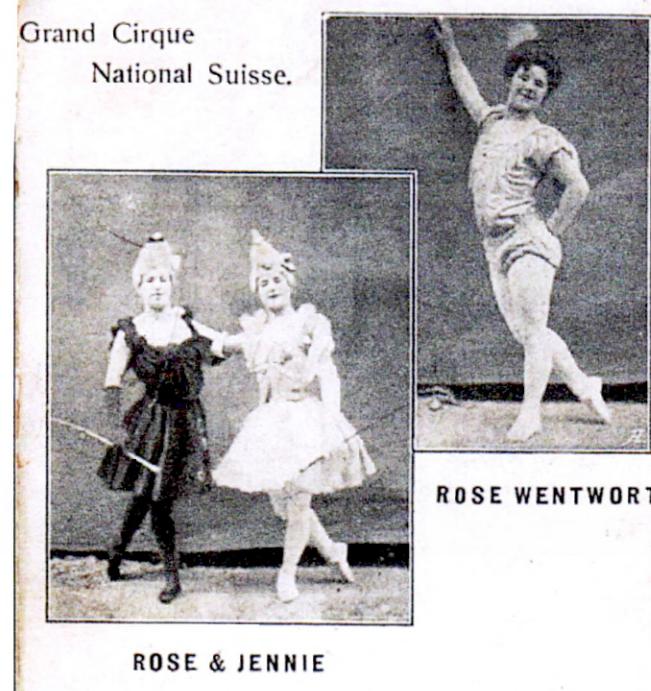
In 1906 the Wentworths were not on the Barnum show. James Bailey died that year. Rose once said in an interview that James Bailey took an interest in her and Harry. There always seemed to be a place for the Wentworths while James Bailey was still alive. Upon Bailey's death, his widow Louisa McCaddon Bailey put her brother Joseph T. McCaddon in charge. He was obviously disgruntled while working for his brother-in-law and upon taking charge "got even" with anyone he felt was favored over him. A great deal of talent left the show and this is perhaps why the Wentworths departed Barnum & Bailey. Perhaps they were enticed away by the chance to do something very different. After playing their usual vaudeville route they joined rehearsals for a new entertainment event. It was called *Feast and Furies* and it was something that was very different and unique. The *Indianapolis News* of June 23, 1906 described the spectacle as having a cast of over 600. Many of these would be locals that would be worked into the performance. The actual number of professionals would be closer to 200. This was an outdoor show set up much like a Wild West show with a simple sidewall around the entertainment. One piece of publicity reported that the stage would be 350 by 250 foot with an elevated circus ring. This seems like a very large

stage and might have been a publicist's exaggeration. The background was a city skyline with a public square in the center. The show opened with a scene of over 200 celebrating a fete day in the town square. Acts were introduced and performed in the public square. When the festival was at its height there was an uprising of anarchists who overcame the police and set fire to the city. Two fire companies, complete with horses and engines, fought the blaze. The mob increased in size and fury until the militia arrived with a Gatling gun to restore order. The fires were put out and the anarchists subdued. Peace then reigned.²¹

Rose Wentworth was one of the featured acts to perform in the city square. She appeared with a white horse pulling a dog cart. Two grooms rode in the cart, one of which provided a clown feature (Harry) for the act. After some fancy driving, a white horse was introduced and mounted on the team. Rose did her act, including the somersault from the cart to the horse. Rose then mounted a roan horse adorned with a collar of electric lights and as she rode dogs weaved in and out between the legs of the horses.

Feasts and Furies was the brainchild of one Henry M. Zeigler. He was more a theatre producer but had a strong desire to get into the circus business. B.A. Bushea was his manager. This great extravaganza seems a bit confusing and odd. The show opened in late May in Lexington, Kentucky, playing a number of Midwest dates including

Grand Cirque
National Suisse.



Wentworth with the Swiss National Circus, circa 1903

Author's Collection

Louisville, Kentucky; Evansville, Illinois; and would fold in Topeka in mid-July. The show reportedly had 20 cities originally scheduled on its route. Reports had the show doing good business but it was susceptible to the weather. It also seemed like a heavy show and took two to three days to set up. One report said that the top three acts in the show would cost Zeigler \$3,000 per week. Rose was a featured act and the only act in the show to rate a photo in the publicity. Would she draw \$1,000 per week? It is possible that she made nothing during the short run of *Feast and Furies*. The show was backed by an outfit called the Cincinnatus Entertainment Company. Zeigler, himself, reportedly lost some \$60,000. Bushea would report that the show would reorganize and reopen on August 1 at Cincinnati playing only southern territory. The circus acts on the show were dropped and the new show would be strictly a "fighting the flames" show, popular at that time. The Wentworths were

out of work. A late July ad posted in the *Clipper* finds Rose and Harry looking for work.²² They would finish the season doing independent dates, some on the Frank Spellman show. Spellman would buy the remains of the *Feasts and Furies* show, take it to his winter quarters, rework it and take an abridged version out on his own carnival two years later.²³

Variety stated that the Wentworths were offered a contract with the Barnum & Bailey Circus for the 1907 season, but said that they would probably sign with Thompson & Dundy for the Luna Park Circus. However the Wentworths would do neither and they would sign with Circo Pubillones in Cuba. A series of letters written by Rose to Al Ringling from Cuba almost seem begging as she seeks work for the 1908 season. She tells Ringling that Mr. Eldred of her trio, would not be performing with her, but that would not affect the turns that she had. In addition to the cart act she offers a principal act, jockey act, and double equestrian act. She offers herself for \$125 per week and Harry for \$65, a far cry from the \$1,000 per week she once claimed at the peak of her career.²⁴ It is doubtful that the Wentworths ever came close to that figure. What is interesting here is that Rose seems to be the one in control doing the bargaining. Some-time in late December, Ringling responded and booked the Wentworths for the 1908 season. McCaddon and company left the show in dire straits and the Ringlings cut salaries by ten percent. Rose received \$100 per week for she and a boy and Harry received \$60. This would essentially end the Wentworths' careers in the tented circus business. They would not return for the 1909 season.

1909 would be a turning point in the personal and professional lives of the Wentworths. Early in 1909, Rose seems to be fulfilling independent dates and there is no mention of Harry. In March she performed at the New York Hippodrome doing a double equestrienne act with Ouika Meers. In June she played a free show date at Luna Park in the Pittsburgh area. Originally booked for one week, she was brought back for a second week due to popular demand. A local paper reported the following:

"Rose Wentworth naturally attracted a great deal of applause. She was brilliant in her handsome equestrienne performance and the introduction of a dozen new features and the ablation of nearly all the stunts she used last week was appreciated."²⁵

As usual, Rose gave her public their money's worth. At some point during the late summer she joined the Frank P.



Rose Wentworth.

Rose Wentworth, circa 1905

Author's Collection

Spellman Shows carnival. Her performance was part of a free midway show. She stated that she liked the format and the *Clipper* noted that she was a big hit. The only reference to Harry in 1909 was a notice from the *Clipper* post office that he had a message waiting. In a later interview Rose said that Harry passed away in 1909, and that she would marry her second husband, Ed Carr, in 1912. This statement would prove to be untrue. Not only would 1909 mark the end of Rose's circus career, but would also end her relationship with Harry Wentworth. It had lasted nearly twenty years. Whether Rose and Harry were ever formally married is up for conjecture.

The *Urbana Courier* of October 10, 1913 carried the following article:

"Clown Tells Of Shattered Romance. Chicago - The story of a shattered romance of a former circus clown was related to police by Harry Wentworth, who is 58 years old. He asked to be sent to the bridewell. He said his wife, once a bareback rider deserted him in Jenkinstown, Pennsylvania, taking \$23,000 from the bank."²⁶

Jenkinstown is literally just down the road from the Alington family home in Abington in the North Philadelphia

suburbs. This was probably the Wentworth family home that Rose had mentioned in an earlier interview.²⁷

Records show that she married Carr in September of 1909 in Jefferson, Kentucky, the same year that Harry supposedly died.²⁸ Rose had joined the Spellman Shows in the summer of 1909 being billed as Rose Wentworth and her troupe of trained Arabian Horses. Also on the Spellman bill was Ed Carr's Wild West, which featured a team of buffalo that were broken to pull a cart. Was this where Rose and Ed met? By mid-September they were married. Harry said he was deserted by Rose in 1909. Does deserted mean divorced? Were he and Rose ever married? In 1909, Harry was fifty-four years old. Rose was thirty-five. Ed Carr was six years Rose's junior. Harry Wentworth had been living in the Chicago area since 1911. Harry Wentworth, circus clown, died in December of 1914 at the Bridewell.

Rose and Ed finished the season on the Spellman show and we find them living on Ed's ranch on the Cheyenne River Indian Reservation in Sterling, South Dakota. This is close to the capital of Pierre. This had to be a big come down for Rose who was in the limelight for nearly twenty years. Rose did say that she was happy on the ranch riding horses and buffalo, but one has to wonder if she really was.

One of Rose's neighbors was a gentleman named Bob



Rose Wentworth and Ed Carr in the Buffalo Chariot at the Calgary Stampede, circa 1912

Calgary Stampede Archives

Yokum (aka Buffalo Bob Yokum or Major Bob Yokum). Yokum was a colorful character right out of the old west. Among other things, he had been a saloon keeper and gun slinging lawman. It was Yokum who broke the buffalo that Carr had to a cart. Yokum had sold a part interest in the buffalo cart to Carr who then exhibited them. Not being the brightest of animals, it supposedly took Yokum five years to break the act. Rose, Carr, and Yokum worked at refining the act while in South Dakota. They traded the cart for a circus racing chariot, no doubt on Rose's urging. After all, she had been driving racing chariots on circuses since she was sixteen. Who better to exhibit the team? In addition, Rose still had name recognition. Once ready they took the buffalo racing chariot on the road.

In 1912 a vaudevillian rope spinner named Guy Weadick approached several large Canadian ranchers with



Rose Wentworth at the Calgary Stampede, circa 1912

Calgary Stampede Archives

an idea of staging a world class rodeo to "celebrate the romance and culture of the disappearing west." They would model the exhibit after some of the large rodeos then performing in the States. All of the standard rodeo turns would be featured, including some for women. Women would be able to participate in fancy trick and saddle bronco riding. These were events made for Rose. The ranchers agreed and the first Calgary Stampede was held in early September of 1912. The Stampede Archives have photos of Rose, Yokum, and Carr driving the buffalo racing chariot. Yokum was a big enough personality to rate a full page in the 1912 Stampede program.²⁹ The chariot looks much like a No. 17 racing chariot from the Beggs Wagon catalog. The catalog lists the chariot as weighing 500 pounds and having a weighted left wheel designed to help maintain stability when making turns.³⁰ The Archives also have two publicity photos of Rose obviously taken when she was several years younger. The Stampede was a success but would be put on hiatus due to the ensuing depression and World War I. It would resume in 1919 and still is held today.

It is interesting to note that the *Calgary Daily Herald* published a daily supplement to its newspaper on the Stampede. It does tell the schedule of events and the winners of those events. Other participants get scant mention. Bob Yokum drove the chariot on opening day, and it makes sense that he did as he was one of the few who rated a full page in the program. Rose gets no mention anywhere in the write ups, although there is a photo of she and Ed driving the team in a parade. There is another photo showing the buffalo team and calling them the Rose Wentworth buffalo team. Ed Carr does get a mention for riding a bucking buffalo.

Upon the closing of the Stampede, the Wentworths and Yokum put together a show featuring the buffalo chariot and other rodeo type acts. Records show at least two other dates in Kamloops and Vancouver. Advertising for the show offered a challenge for the locals. "Bring your best bucking bronc and if Rose or Bob Yokum or one of their cowboys get bucked off win \$50."³¹ The show was on the road at least until the end of September.

1913 would find the Rose Wentworth Buffalo Chariot on the Buffalo Bill-Pawnee Bill Wild West. The show featured the chariot with its own lithograph showing Rose driving the chariot. In addition to driving the chariot Rose did a bareback act. This later act would appear in the Indian encampment scene with her and Ed in Indian costume. Since there was no ring, they used a lunge line to keep the horse moving in circles and Rose would perform

her act. The *Clipper* said it didn't take long for the audience to figure out who was performing and they reacted with loud applause.³² Rose was still a circus celebrity. The Two Bills Show would close in the summer of 1913 in Denver, and the Carrs joined the James Patterson Shows, a railroad carnival, in Brandon, Manitoba. They would finish the season on that show. A late November ad was published in the *Clipper* by the Arlington and Chandler Show looking for acts for a South American tour in 1914. Among those specifically sought were the Rose Wentworth buffalos.³³ Whether the Carrs ever answered the call is unknown, but the show itself lasted for only the 1914 season.

The end of Rose's career is a bit clouded. Did she go with the Arlington & Chandler Show? Did she play other Wild West dates after 1913? Indications are that the Carrs retired by 1915. They returned to South Dakota for a while, but at some point moved to New Mexico. They are listed in the 1922 Roswell, New Mexico City Directory. At the same time Rose appears in the 1920 Federal Census as living in the Allington family homestead in Abington, Pennsylvania. Rose's mother died in 1923 and Rose returned to Willow

Grove to care for her father. The Carrs divorced sometime in the early 1920s. Ed would remarry in 1924. He is buried in New Mexico with his second wife.

After her father's death in 1932, Rose lived alone in the big seventeen room house in Willow Grove that she purchased in 1894. In 1937 the local paper did a feature on Rose. It seems she opened a boarding kennel in her house and this is what caught the attention of the paper.³⁴ A later 1945 article finds that she had 70 dogs, 17 cats, and a forty-two year old deaf parrot living in the kennels. The reporter found her not only living with her guests but also her memories. The walls of her house were covered with photos and posters. The story was picked up and carried by other newspapers.³⁵

The last mention we have of Rose was in a 1949 article that lists guests at a party thrown for circus personnel by a fan named Palumbo during the Philadelphia stand. She is simply listed along with the other guests at the party. Draper mentions that Rose was experiencing "visions" in her later years and in 1949 was admitted to the Norristown, Pennsylvania State Hospital. She passed away in the hospital on

November 11, 1958 at the age of 84. Listed on her death certificate, among other causes, is the fact that she suffered from psychosis with cerebral arteriosclerosis, which would explain the odd behaviors in her later life.

A 1912 *Clipper* article calls Rose Wentworth and May Wirth the greatest riders of their generations, and that they were. An article written on Rose at the height of her career stated:

"Rose Wentworth, the woman who does somersaults on horseback in the Barnum show, was an actress – a chorus girl, who saw nothing ahead for a girl like herself on the modern stage – and when she announced to her companions that she was going to be a "lady rider" they laughed at her. This was but a few years ago.



Rose Wentworth at the Calgary Stampede, circa 1912

Calgary Stampede Archives



Poster for Rose Wentworth with the Buffalo Bill-Pawnee Bill Wild West, 1913

The Ringling Museum, Tibbals Collection

She is at the head of her profession in her specialties on bareback. She was determined to accomplish what no other woman can do, however, and she received every encouragement from Mr. Bailey....”³⁶

This is exactly what happened. Rose came to the circus as a sixteen year old girl with some dancing skills and a lot of determination. Willing to do anything to advance her career, she went from ballet girl and sideshow performer, to contortionist and aerialist, and finally star equestrienne. Rose was a trouper without peer. The last article written about Rose in her lifetime was called “Retired Circus Queen, 79, Knows She Can Ride Em.” In the article Rose said “I know that I could no longer throw a somersault on the back of a horse, but I know that I would not be bucked off.”³⁷ Who would not agree? **BW**

Acknowledgements

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the people who were so generous with their help in putting this article together. Fred Dahlinger who gave me the encouragement and provided so much information for this article. Maureen Brunsdale at the Milner Collection, Peter Shrake at the Circus World Museum, Christine Hayes at the Calgary Public Library, Shannon Murray at the Calgary Stampede Archives who provided information and possible links to other resources. Richard Flint and Fred Pfening who with their great knowledge of this period were quick to answer questions. Last but not least, Mr. John McKelvey, a “buffalo aficionado,” who so generously granted permission to use his buffalo photos.

Endnotes

1. “Pretty Rose Wentworth,” *New York Times*, April 28, 1895.
2. Pennsylvania Death Certificate for Rose Wentworth Carr. Nov. 18, 1958.
3. “Rose Wentworth’s Career,” *Boston Post*, June 14, 1896, 11.
4. “Magic Under the Big Top,” John Polacsek, *Bandwagon*, July-August 2012, 26.
5. “Rose Wentworth A Circus Legend,” John Daniel Draper, *Bandwagon*, July-August 2013, 17.
6. Ibid.
7. Barnum & Bailey 1890 Route Book.
8. “Rose Wentworth’s Career,” *Boston Post*, June 14, 1896.
9. 1893 Forepaugh Sells program.
10. *New York Clipper*, Dec.
11. 1894 Barnum & Bailey Route Book
12. *New York Times*, April 26.
13. *Chicago Inter Ocean*, September 8, 1895.
14. *Chicago Inter Ocean*, June 12, 1897, 9.
15. *Washington Post*, February 11, 1896, 6.
Linda Jeal went on the record stating that Mollie Brown’s niece, Josie DeMott was the second woman to throw a back somersault. “The Queen of the Flaming Zone,” James W. Shettel. Circus Scrap Book, No. 8 (Oct), 1930, pp. 19-26, <<http://www.circushistory.org/Scrap/Scrap30Oct.htm>>. If this is true, Wentworth would have been no higher than the third woman to throw one.
16. *New York Clipper*, April 10, 1897.
17. “Women in the Circus,” *The Evening Argus*, August 3, 1897.
18. *New York Clipper*, November 1903.
19. *The Washington Post*, February 5, 1905, 7.
20. *New York Clipper*, March 18, 1905.
21. “Woman Appears In An Act That Is Out Of The Ordinary,” *Indianapolis News*, June 23, 1906, 28.
22. *New York Clipper*, July 1906.
23. “Frank Spellman Buys Feasts and Furies,” *Variety*, December 19, 1908.
24. Draper, 21.
25. *Pittsburg Daily Post*, June 29, 1908.
26. “Clown Tell Of Shattered Romance,” *Urbana Courier*, October 10, 1913. Bridewell in this quotation could be a generic term for prison or may refer to a specific prison in Chicago.
27. *New York Times*, April 28, 1895.
28. Kentucky Marriage Records 1852-1914 for Hiram E. Carr and Maud Rose Allington.
29. 1912 Calgary Stampede program.
30. *Beggs Wagon Catalog*, 12.
31. “Rose Wentworth Carr and Major Yokum’s Great Buffalo Exhibition, September 27, 1912, 2.
32. *New York Clipper*, April 1913.
33. *New York Clipper*, September 27, 1913.
34. “Ex Circus Star Recalls Time British King Pulled Her Hair,” *Indiana Weekly Messenger* (Indiana, Pennsylvania) October 27, 1937.
35. “Retired Bareback Queen, 70, Knows She Can Ride “Em,” *Billboard*, October 20, 1945, Interview with *Philadelphia Record*.
36. *Pittsburg Post*, September 19, 1897, 7.
37. *Billboard*, October 20, 1945.

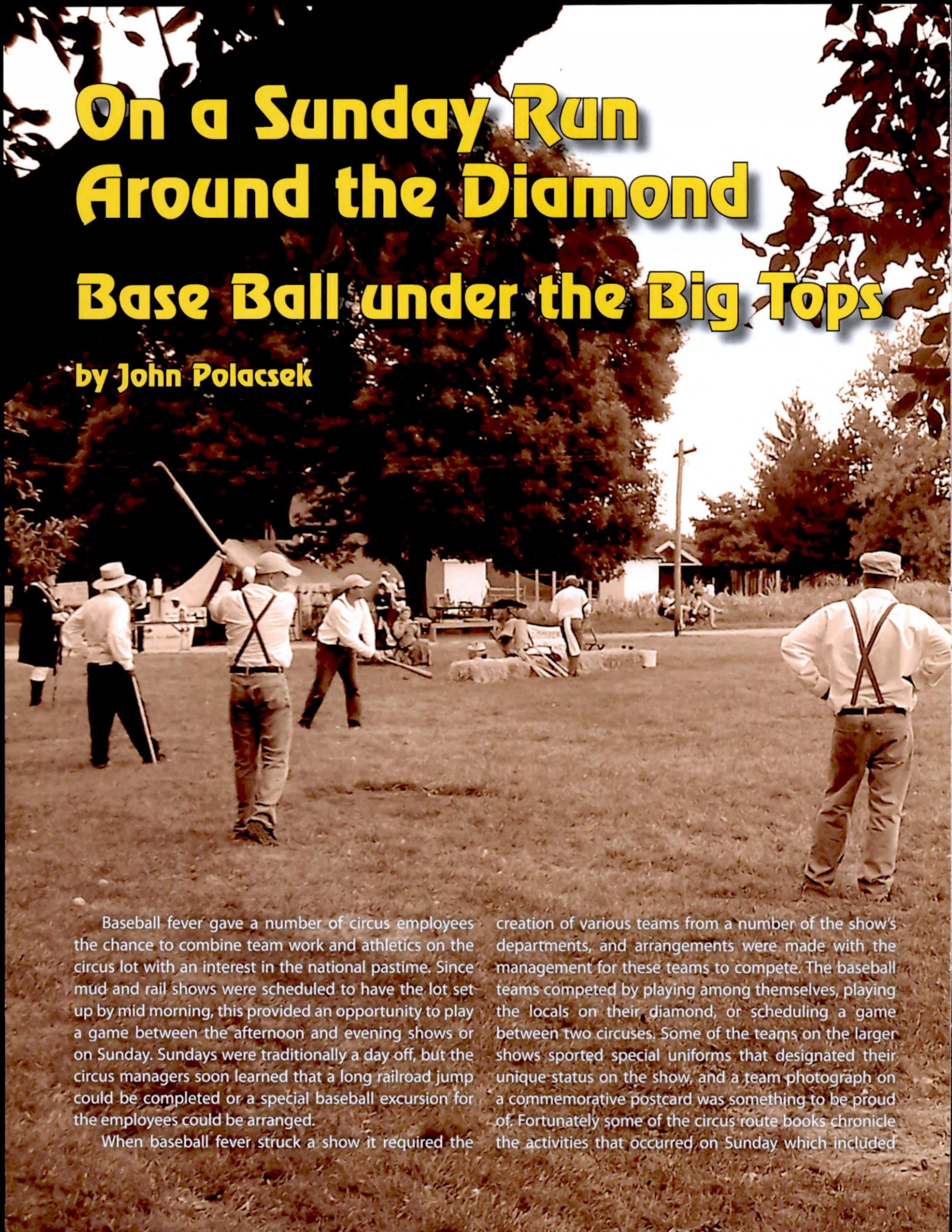
On a Sunday Run Around the Diamond Base Ball under the Big Tops

by John Polacsek

Baseball fever gave a number of circus employees the chance to combine team work and athletics on the circus lot with an interest in the national pastime. Since mud and rail shows were scheduled to have the lot set up by mid morning, this provided an opportunity to play a game between the afternoon and evening shows or on Sunday. Sundays were traditionally a day off, but the circus managers soon learned that a long railroad jump could be completed or a special baseball excursion for the employees could be arranged.

When baseball fever struck a show it required the

creation of various teams from a number of the show's departments, and arrangements were made with the management for these teams to compete. The baseball teams competed by playing among themselves, playing the locals on their diamond, or scheduling a game between two circuses. Some of the teams on the larger shows sported special uniforms that designated their unique status on the show, and a team photograph on a commemorative postcard was something to be proud of. Fortunately some of the circus route books chronicle the activities that occurred on Sunday which included





long runs, repairing the canvas, or having enough time to arrange a baseball game. The other source of documentation comes from the amusement industry "bibles" the *New York Clipper* and the *Billboard*, as well as local newspapers.

Although the national pastime brought together like minded individuals, they still had to overcome the lack of equipment, no set playing field, the show's management

and a myriad of Blue Laws that banned activities on Sunday. When the Buffalo Bill/ Pawnee Bill Wild West Show spent Sunday at Concord, New Hampshire in June 1911, "nothing happened to break the monotony, although the two ball teams tried to play a game and were quickly suppressed by the town marshal, who went so far as to stop the boys from playing handball on the back of the show lot."¹

Editor's note: The term *baseball* has evolved over time from *base ball* to *baseball*. All quotes maintain the original spelling, the rest of the article uses the modern term *baseball*. An interesting etymology can be read at: <http://blog.thehenryford.org/2012/08/when-base-ball-became-baseball/>

photo by John Wells

Not every show had an organized baseball team, even though pickup games were played on the circus lot when time allowed. The June 1, 1904 issue of the Sig Sautelle's *Tent City News*, a weekly newspaper issued every Wednesday during the season by J. C. Banks, contained a letter to the editor of the *Tent City News*; "Why is there not one or more base ball teams in Tent City? There is an abundance of talent and no limit to the number of fans here. Look about the lot any pleasant afternoon between shows and from 20 to 40 men may be seen playing scrub games. Wouldn't it be more interesting to all admirers of the national sport if two or three clubs were organized and a series of games arranged? I am certain that it would be and for one I hope the boys will get together without any loss of time and form a small league. In haste, BASEBALL CRANK."

In 1884 the P. T. Barnum Circus route book noted that on August 24 the show was making a Sunday run across the State of Michigan between Bay City and Muskegon. This was the longest run of the season and the train departed the depot at 8:30 A.M. when the show finished breakfast. It was a three hour ride to a designated recreation area called Thornapple Lake between Nashville and Hastings. The show arrived at 11:30 A.M. and the 400 acre lake was the perfect setting where the employees could relax after some light duties were completed.

The horses and animals were fed and watered, and the

cook house wagon was left on the railroad car but stripped of its contents so that everyone could participate in a dinner. Some of the boys had a game of baseball while others went rowing and fishing on the thirty foot deep lake. All enjoyed themselves hugely in what proved to be a great relief from the monotony of the journey. One does not often hear of the stop over excursions that the circus provided for the staff, nevertheless baseball was played on the 1884 P. T. Barnum Circus.

Within a few years baseball became an organized activity on P. T. Barnum's *Greatest Show on Earth* according to the 1886 route book. On Sunday May 30, 1886 at Elizabethtown, Kentucky there was a contest between the Elizabethtown Base Ball Club and a team from the Barnum Circus. The outcome was a victory for the Barnum Nine as they defeated the locals by a score of ten to four. On Monday May 31, the Barnum Base Ball Club was organized with George Carron (clown) the pitcher and manager, James Hughes (an usher) playing catcher, John Monaghan (big top crew) playing first base, Orrin Hollis (principal bareback rider and team captain) playing second base, Thomas Kelly (hotel and forage agent) playing third base, Al Carron (clown) playing short stop, William Coleman (leaper) playing center field, Ed Balcomb playing right field, and W. Stevens playing left field.

On June 7, 1886 at Vincennes, Indiana the route book



The Forepaugh-Sells baseball team, circa 1907

Zweifel Archives

noted that "Base ball employs the attention of the male members of the company." There was the notation that a "tie game with a local amateur club concluded in a dispute after the ninth inning" the previous Sunday.

On June 26, 1886 it was noted that "The crack base ball nine among the members of the circus have been 'Doing up' all the clubs they have tackled. In Terre Haute, Indiana, the game was a very exciting one, as you may see by the score - thirty nine to six in favor of the Barnums. They would like to cross bats with any club in any city where they stop over on Sunday. Local clubs can make games by applying to George Hollis or to George Carron, pitcher."

On June 29, 1886 at Upper Sandusky, Ohio the Mikado Base Ball Club was organized with the following members: Merritt F. Young (ticket seller) - treasurer, Harry Marriam (ticket accountant), James E. Fay (outside candy stand), Benjamin Berriman (outside candy stand), Al Golden, George Monell (outside ticket agent), George Haskett (door tender), John Williams and R. H. King (hotel and forage agent).

Most circus employees wanted to play baseball when the opportunity arose. In *Traveling with a Circus, A History of Hunting's New York Cirque Curriculum*, the 1889 route book that Prof. Charles E. Griffin published, he recorded items of interest and pointed penciling. The show moved in one sixty foot box car, one sixty foot flat car and one sixty

foot sleeping car. After opening April 29 in New Castle, Pennsylvania, it played a number of multiple day stands. This route allowed the employees time for some competition on the baseball diamond against the six teams of the show's various departments.

At Middletown, New York on July 26th the performers beat the canvas men at baseball - score ten to one. The show moved to Rahway, New Jersey for August 21 & 22. On the 22nd "A great game of ball today between the performers and the band. Score, eighteen to two, in favor of the Spangles. The band plays better music than ball." The show played New Brunswick, New Jersey on August 23 and 24 where "the performers and workingmen play a game of base ball. Score nine to three, in favor of the performers." The Umpire was Dave Dunkle (property man) and Scorer, Lew Hunting (tight wire performer and son of the show's owner). From August 26-29 the show was in Trenton, New Jersey where on the 27th "Another game of ball to-day, Side Show vs. Dressing Room. Score twenty four to twenty nine, in favor of Dressing Room."

The John Robinson Circus was traveling on the Ohio and Mississippi River by boat at the beginning of the 1890 season when baseball fever hit the show. There were two teams of nine organized, one consisting of the privilege men, under the management of Fitzgerald, the other of performers under the management of John F. Robinson,



Unloading cook house supplies for the picnic, circa 1910

Zweifel Archives

the show's owner. The first game took place at Marysville, Kentucky and "after a struggle of over two hours in the hot sun the game ended in favor of 'Johnny's nine with a score of forty two to six."²

The idea of playing baseball with the consent of the show owner extended for a number of years on the John Robinson Circus. There was a match game at Lock Haven, Pennsylvania on Sunday June 23, 1901 between the 'Front End' and the 'Dressing Room'. While the outcome of the game is unknown it is known that the umpire for the game was none other than John G. Robinson, the son of the show's owner.³

By 1905 the John Robinson 10 Big Shows conducted fund-raising projects for a number of local entities using their baseball team. At Popular Bluff, Arkansas a game was arranged between the circus performers and the local U.S. Calvary post. The game lasted eleven innings and the final score was two to one in favor of the performers. The winning run was made by Jimmie Dutton (equestrian) lining out a three bagger. De Marlo, the contortionist, slid from third base to home plate. The game was a benefit and the

receipts were turned over to the churches of the town.⁴

An article in the 1894 *Official Route Book* of the Adam Forepaugh Shows, compiled by F. B. Hutchinson, was devoted to what he called 'Pleasant Diversions':

In the busy life of the shows there was naturally but little time for play, but still the boys found time once in a while to have a little fun aside from that which incidentally enters into the pursuit of routine duties. The route of shows took them into and within reach of many of the New England coast resorts, and many a dip into the briny was taken by all hands.

When a few young Americans are gathered together there is one supreme sport which they all enjoy. It is hardly necessary to state that it is base ball, and of course it would not do to allow a season to roll around without one or two sporadic attacks of the fever to develop.

The first game was played at Woodsville (New



Ringling Bros. World's Greatest Shows Base Ball Team, season of 1905. Note "bat boy".

Pfening Archives

Hampshire Sunday August 19) – town of blessed memory, not. The contestants upon one side were candy butchers and tickets sellers, upon the other, cook tent and canvas men. Out of consideration for the managers of the shows, who may want the services of these men, and to prevent them from being stolen by managers of National League teams, their names and individual scores are not given. About 500 of the towns people were present – the game was a god send to them, especially as it cost them nothing – and talk about excitement! Whew! Well, the risk of naming Dr. James White and F. B. Hutchinson, in charge of the pasteboards and sugar nines, and Al. Webb and Harry Kelly, in charge of the feeders and cloth-stretchers, is taken. Perhaps it wouldn't do to omit mention of those beautiful home run hits made by C. E. Davis, Tom Shea and F. B. Hutchinson. But let the terrible tale be told by

this truthful summary of the Score: In a nine inning game the Butchers and Ticket Sellers scored twenty runs and the Cook Tent and Canvas Men scored nine runs.

The next time they got at it was at Delhi (New York, Sunday September 9), the contending nines were about the same as before. The nine defeated felt the sting and they thirsted for revenge, and were prepared to drink it in as Gambrinus would his liquid topaz. Percy Brown was brave enough to umpire the game and lived through it, being neck and neck all the way through. Doctor James White secured a life-time mortgage upon the affections of his fellows by a home run in the eighth inning and caused the following score to be recorded after nine innings: Butchers and Ticket Sellers scored nine runs and the Cook Tent and Canvas Men scored eight runs.



Edward Kelty photo of the 1934 Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey team with Dorothy Herbert at center

The Ringling Museum, Tibbals Collection

The crews of the advance advertising cars of the 1894 Walter L. Main Circus were infected with baseball fever. By the time the show was out for sixteen weeks the competition had become fierce. "A match game of baseball is to be played by nines from the No. 3 and No. 2 Cars, at some point on Long Island, during the trip on the Island. Both cars claim the better club, and a match game is necessary to satisfy Brother Douds and his nine that No. 2 has the best players."⁵

Not every match game could be finished in the allotted time as those who wagered on the Sells Bros. Circus Baseball Team found out in 1895. "A 'continued in our next' baseball game is now in progress between the musicians and performers. Six innings have been played, and the score stands 13 to 12 in favor of the performers. The game was started at Wilmington, Delaware (June 17). Two innings were played there, two at New Brunswick, New Jersey (June 20), and two at Newburgh, New York (June 26). The game will be concluded at the earliest opportunity. The result is anxiously awaited. Some people will be either broke or badly bent when the agony is over, for some good sized wagers have been made on the game."⁶

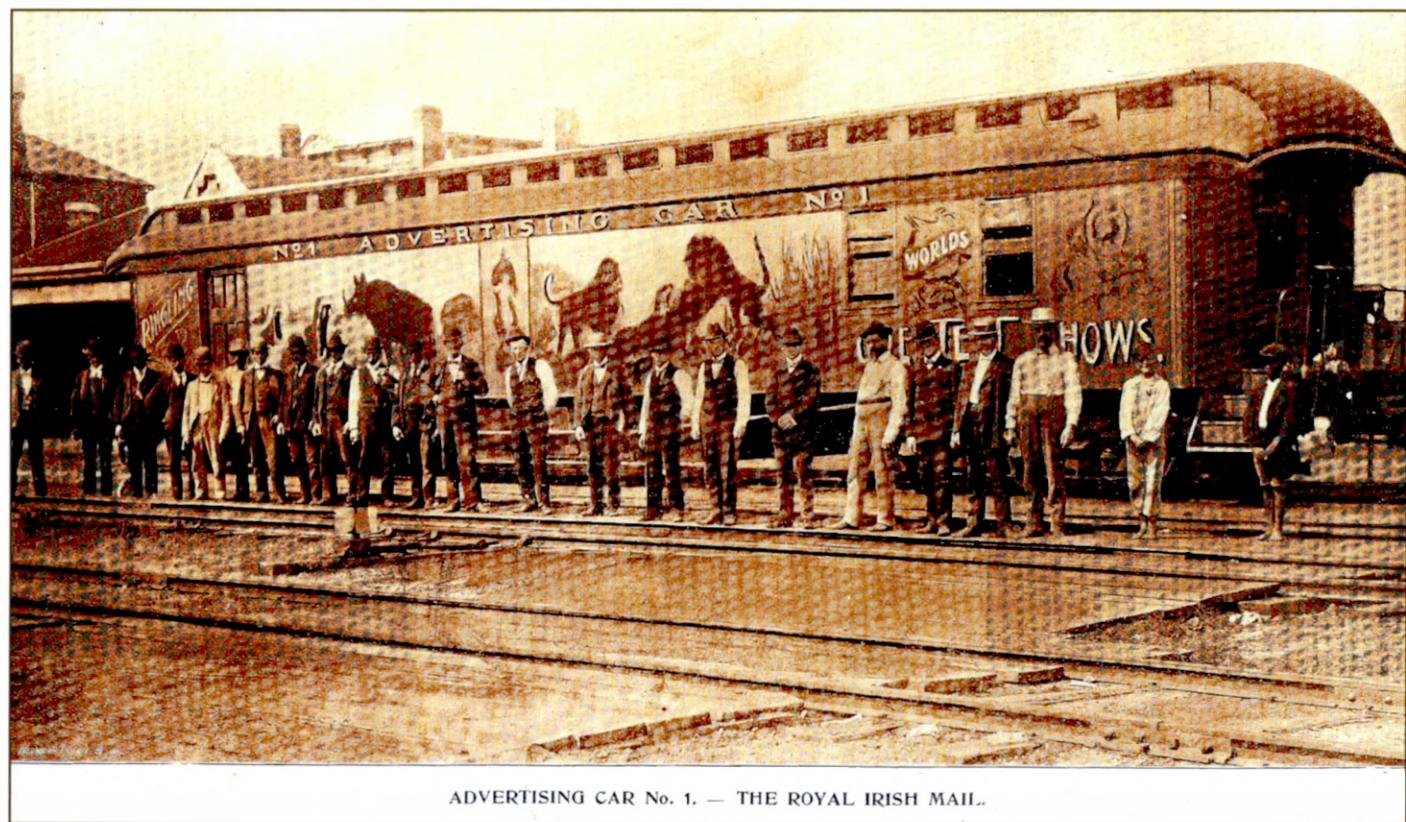
The 1896 route book of the Buffalo Bill's Wild West and Congress of Rough Riders of the World was compiled and

published by Charles R. Hutchinson. It contained interesting events and happenings for the season, and the location of the baseball game on the lot was usually set in the middle of the arena. This location was a distinct advantage as games could be played with no obstructions on the 178 foot by 403 foot field.

"On Sunday, June 28 the show arrived in Fort Wayne, Indiana at 6 A.M. There was a three fourths mile haul to the lot which was found small and in bad condition. The cook house and blacksmith shop had to go on another lot, and the horse tents and dressing room was very crowded. All canvas was put up early in the morning and in the afternoon there was a match game between the Candy Butchers and the Cooks. Betting on the game was lively, and it came out in favor of the Candy Butchers who won by a score of sixteen to eleven."

When the show arrived in Columbus, Ohio on Sunday July 12, all the canvas and seats which framed the arena were put up making a 224 foot by 465 foot open space. There was a match game of baseball in the arena during the afternoon between the candy butchers and the dressing room force. The victors were the candy butchers who won by a score of ten to two.

The opportunity to catch a professional baseball game



Ringling's Royal Irish Mail Advance Car from the 1898 route book

Author's collection

happened when the show reached Detroit, Michigan on July 26 and a twenty-five mile excursion to view a 'real' game at Mount Clemens, Michigan was organized. Charles Hutchinson (the route book publisher and show treasurer), Joseph Quaid (accountant), Charles Ramsey (confectionary), Charles Petty (cook house advance agent), Henry Barnum (layer out), Fred Hutchinson (accountant and main door tender) and Edwin Aiken (secretary) took the interurban cars "to see the worst game of ball that was ever played." They had to stand up in the car all the way to the game and starved all the way back. Furthermore they had a layover of several hours and finally returned to the show lot at 1:30 A.M.⁷

The game was between the Detroit and the Minneapolis professional baseball teams. There was a small crowd and the non-appearance of the staff umpire caused the postponement of the scheduled game. It was then decided that the Detroit and Minneapolis teams would play an exhibition game for five innings. The game ended with the score of six to five in favor of Minneapolis before the rain interfered.⁸

Support for the circus baseball teams came on the circus lot, and in the advance advertising cars that heralded the shows coming. The 1897 Great Wallace Show was no

exception: "Baseball fever has at last attacked the members of the Great Wallace Shows and a carefully selected nine has been organized back with the show, as well as one with each of the advance cars. At Danville, Pennsylvania, July 10, the first series of ten to be played occurred, resulting in a victory for the Wallace Shows Club, the score standing three to one in their favor. The make-up of the two clubs is as follows: Wallace Show nine, Lewis Polley, catcher; Reno McCree (bareback rider), pitcher; Charles Alderfer (head balancer), first base; Arthur Leonard, second base; Fred Jenks (clown), short stop; Charles Gellette, left field; Hayes Werntz, center field; Mead Werntz (clown), right field; Francis Reed (bareback rider), third base; Oscar Lowanda (bareback rider), captain. Advertising Car Number 1 Nine, W. W. Robbins, captain; Thomas Haggerty, pitcher; V. Smith, catcher; M. Fagin, first base; E. Tress, second base; E. C. Liard, third base; H. Robinson, right field; E. Murphy, center field; R. McAllister, left field. Umpire, Burt Johnson, with Bert Davis, keeper of records and seals. The second of the series will take place during the present week with the Show Club and Advertising Car Number 2."⁹

The advance advertising cars crews had time on their hands once the lithographs were hung in the windows with care and the promotional couriers and heralds were distrib-



Lemon Bros. team with their mascot

Pfening Archives

uted. Car Number 2 of the Ringling Bros. Show organized a baseball team by early May of 1897. On May 16 a group of nines from Car Number 2 defeated the Dillon, Montana Club in that city by a score of forty to twenty five. It was stated that "with a little more practice the boys will be fit to meet almost any amateur baseball organization. The roster of the club was Thomas Foster, catcher; George Goodhart, pitcher; H. McLeod, first base; Dan Malone, second base; J. Tucker, third base; Al Reeves, short stop; William Ward, left field; Billy Fritch, center field; William Erlinger, right field; and Charles Dering, substitute."¹⁰

In 1898 Ringling Bros. Circus had an advance advertising car Number 1 called 'The Royal Irish Mail,' managed by Al. G. Ringling. *The Circus Annual, A Route Book of Ringling Brothers World's Greatest Shows Season of 1898* noted that there were two baseball teams on board and early in the

season the boys begin "to talk baseball, and there are rumors of coming combats on the diamond field."

At Cedar Rapids, Iowa there was "baseball in the afternoon two miles out of town, a drawn battle in the rain." At Cresco, Iowa "the baseball enthusiasts have a little practice with the new outfit at Dubuque." The car laid up at Woonsocket, South Dakota over Sunday, and it was there that the "second baseball battle of the season" took place. "(Charles) Treager and (T. K.) Titus lead the opposing nines and the Treagerites win a glorious victory."

The lay over at Tracey, Minnesota produced a furious baseball battle, the third of the season. The Treagerites go down in defeat thirty-two to thirteen. The teams consisted of Charles Treager, captain; Tom Scanlan; Orin Stevens; Kerry Meagher; Charles Snowhill; Joseph Howard; E. J. Bishop; Sam Hamant; and Kurt Eisfeldt. The opposi-



Ringling team with mascot, Big Bingo, circa 1913

Pfening Archives

tion consisted of T. K. Titus, captain; C. M. Conner; B. G. Scanlan; William Shea; W. H. Haskins; Gus Eisfeldt; John Graves; E. F. Bluski; and Nic Petit.

When the advance car arrived at Algona, Iowa the game did not start until 2:00 P.M. The Treagerites were "badly worsted." The game was played at the fairgrounds, a mile and half out of town, "in the presence one spectator, who managed to endure four innings before resorting to flight."¹¹

The Adam Forepaugh and Sells Bros. Circus of 1900 stopped in Pottstown, Pennsylvania on April 29-30. It was there that the circus baseball team composed of members of the band and the dressing room defeated a local baseball club. Fortunately "no broken heads resulted from this game, as is sometimes the case in such games." On June 11 at Schenectady, New York the lot was in the fair grounds. "A game of ball between Jack Hunt's nine crackerjacks and a team from the dressing room and band resulted in defeat for the latter." It was also noted that a goat was the mascot for the Hunt club.¹²

Having a team mascot was also noted on the Lemon Bros. Circus baseball team of 1905 for the nines had a victorious year being undefeated and their mascot was a white poodle. The Ringling Bros. Circus baseball team in 1905 had Leo Jackson as their honorary mascot, possibly a position that morphed into batboy. An elephant named Big Bingo, the earth's largest pachyderm, was the mascot of the

Ringling Bros. baseball team from 1913 to 1915, and a fitting backstop for the Bingo's team photograph.

In the notes from the Ringling Bros. World's Greatest Shows in the July 16, 1904 *New York Clipper* the correspondent commented on the baseball fever that struck the show like an epidemic:

A Sunday run brings the show to Duluth, where the glorious Fourth will be properly celebrated by the appearance of the World's Greatest. Two leagues of baseball clubs have been organized around the show the past month. The fever started at Plattsburg, New York, on Decoration Day. At first there were only two nines, the clowns and the acrobats, but from this beginning a first class league was started. Next the other performers got together, and at Fort Wayne (Indiana) the Ringling Baseball Association was organized with eight clubs, as follows: Acrobats, Riders, Bicyclists, Clowns, Hippodrome Riders, Aerialists, Front Door Men, and the Concert Performers. The games, as played daily were, of course, watched by the working men, who thoroughly enjoyed the sport, and realizing there was fun to be had for the taking, they also started in a modest way, and now have a league of their own, composed of eight clubs, made up of the following: Property Men, Animal Men, Canvas Men, Light Men, Train

Men, Elephant Men, Seat Men, and the Waiters.

To illustrate how the baseball fever has spread over the show, the choristers, employed in the spectacle, Jerusalem, are getting up a club with the sole intention of beating the ballet girls, who have been practicing with a cast off outfits belong to one of the league nines. Every day a half dozen or more games are in progress, and one does not have to go far for good entertainment.

In July 1906 the Ringling Bros. Circus returned to Duluth, Minnesota. The first of five trains arrived from St. Paul between three and four o'clock with the rest of the show arriving shortly afterwards. Before noon the circus was fully erect and the advance



The Ringling Kidos, circa 1905

The Ringling Museum, Glasier Collection

press notices claimed that it was a day of rest for the performers who patronized the recreation points and amusement places in and around the city.

Public relations also provided one group of circus ball players with an opponent. The select group of circus ball players, who were also members of the Elks, planned to meet at Duluth's Athletic Park to meet the Universal Millers for a 3:00 P.M. engagement. A fund raising baseball game had been arranged between the Duluth team and the circus Elks. Members of the local order of Elks were out in force to root for their brother Elks. The proceeds of the game were donated to the building fund of the local lodge and it was hoped that a good sum would be realized from the game.¹³

The other amusement bible, *The Billboard*, in June 1904, noted that the Barnum & Bailey Circus had a number of active baseball teams and was able to bring together fifty-four players out of their staff of 1,053 people: "There are six baseball nines with the show and whenever the weather permits, one or more games are played between the contending nines. Within a short time the Barnum & Bailey Nines will be made up from the best players of the six nines, and local clubs along the route will be challenged to play ball. The Clowns have a nine, the Musicians another,

the Ticket Sellers and Ushers another, the Property Men a nine and the Bareback Riders and General Performers also have a nine. Some great baseball talent has been discovered and when the Barnum & Bailey Nines is organized it looks as if they will be able to give a pretty good argument to almost any other nine they may come across."¹⁴

Not only was there baseball fever on the Barnum & Bailey circus lot, but the advance billings cars were also infected. The September 23, 1905 *New York Clipper* noted two articles about the hard working men on the cars, twenty-two in Car No. 2 and sixteen in Car No. 4. Car No. 2 arrived in San Francisco on Friday evening, August 18 and commenced the next morning to advertise and herald the coming of the "Greatest on Earth." "The Nos. 4 and 2 cars played a game of baseball during their sojourn here, in which the No. 2 came out with flying colors and added another victory to its long list." Notes from the Billposters Local No. 35 Union in San Francisco added the following: "The Barnum Show has a week in San Francisco and is doing finely. Nos. 1 and 2 cars billed the city. There was an exciting game of baseball between No. 2 and No. 4 cars. No. 2 winning by a score of 17 to 7. All the boys of the Barnum Show enjoyed themselves well while here." The sixteen men on Advance Car No. 4 were under the direction of Charles

Hayes, while the twenty-two men on Car No. 2 were under the personal supervision of A. C. Abbott.

By 1911 the Barnum & Bailey baseball teams had expanded across the age and gender gap: "The baseball fever has the show in its grasp, and we have about six different teams. The ladies' dressing room has a team, which played the kid team, and won the game. They practice daily, and in a short time they are expected to challenge the No. 1 team. There is a ball team called the old folks' team. They played one game, and they were seen limping. It is rumored that it will be the first and last game of the season."¹⁵

The Barnum & Bailey show management (the Ringling brothers since 1907) routed the show to provide the staff and employees an opportunity to relax before the July 8, 1912 performance at Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. The show "...Sunday July 7 in



1905 Ringling team photographed by Frederick W. Glasier.

The Ringling Museum, Glasier Collection

Chambersburg at Wolf Lake Park, an ideal place for circuses. All circuses playing here are endeavoring to make this a Monday stand on account of facilities and amusements on Sunday. The large herd of elephants under head trainer Maloney were given a bath in the large lake to the delight of 5,000 visitors. In the afternoon the Moose baseball team defeated the colored team of the circus twelve to seven. In the evening a dance was held in the large dance pavilion for the show people only." The park offered a bowling alley, shuffle boards, dining room, carousel horses, row boats, fishing, and an athletic field.¹⁶

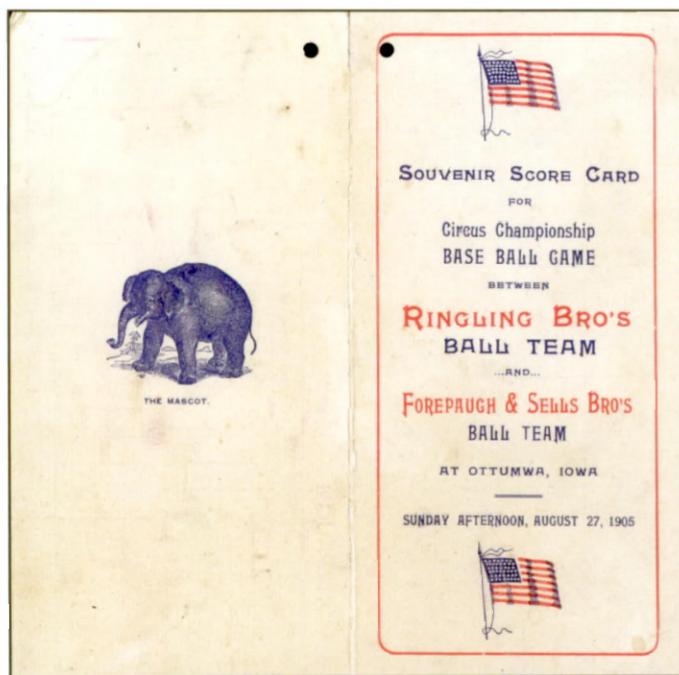
After seeking out the best players, the various teams would occasionally put on a special event to give the other show employees the opportunity to view the participating teams in action. The Barnum & Bailey show on Sunday August 1, 1915 at Grand Island, Nebraska had score cards printed. The score card stated that music was provided by Mr. Brill and his Barnum & Bailey Concert Band. Many of the acts took small ads on the card to pay for its printing. The Moose Lodge was managed by Burns O'Sullivan while Tony DeKos managed the performers' team. On the performers' team were: Charles Siegrist, short stop; Orrin Davenport, catcher; Pat Valdo, first base; and Fred Derrick, substitute.¹⁷

The Barnum & Bailey baseball teams also put on a special game on Sunday July 8, 1917, in Minot, North Dakota and printed a ten page score card bound with red ribbons. The Moose team played the show's "Happy Jacks Giants"

for the benefit of the Barnum & Bailey Red Cross Chapter. Some of the players on the Moose team were Alfredo Codona, left field; Ira Millett, first base; and Orrin Davenport who was new to the Moose team played short stop. On the back of the card the Moose Lodge ran a pitch for members, stating that the charter was open for only a short time. Initiation was \$5.00 and dues seventy five cents a month. The lodge would pay a weekly sick benefit of \$7.00 and each member received a \$100.00 death benefit.¹⁸

Not all show baseball games went as planned for some games were called off due to a delayed train, or inclement weather required all employees to work on a torn canvas after a windstorm. In June of 1911 the performers of the Downie & Wheeler Show formed a baseball team and played a game with the canvasmen at Dover, Maine that ended in indecision. "There is some doubt existing among the opponents as to the decision reached, for the score stood six to six in the seventh inning, with the canvasmen in the field; the performers had three men on bases, with Archie Silverlake at the bat. Just as our old friend Archie was about to make one of his famous home run hits, the bell rang, announcing dinner, and Archie forgot all about the three men on bases and started a Marathon for the dining tent, with the remaining members of the baseball fraternity running a close second. However, we are in hopes of finishing the game next Sunday, at Oakland."¹⁹

Frank Butler had an interest in baseball while he and his wife Annie Oakley were on the Young Buffalo's Wild



Scorecard from the Ringling Bros. vs. Forepaugh-Sells game of 1905

RINGLING BROS. BASE BALL TEAM.												
PLAYER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	AT BAT
	RUNS	HITS	BASES	TOTAL	P. O.	ASCH	EFFITS					
1. KARL MILVO, c. t.												
2. LOUIE GLINSERETTI, c.												
3. FRED ROMALLO, p.												
4. RENO McCREE, 3 b. Capt.												
5. GUS GLINSERETTI, 1 b.												
6. PAUL DE VENE, 4. s.												
7. ALEX. PICARO, 2 b.												
8. GEO. JACKSON, r. 1.												
9. ED. RIO, l. 1.												
10												
TOTAL RUNS												
FOREPAUGH & SELLS BROS. BASE BALL TEAM.												
PLAYER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	AT BAT
	RUNS	HITS	BASES	TOTAL	P. O.	ASCH	EFFITS					
1.												
2.												
3.												
4.												
5.												
6.												
7.												
8.												
9.												
10												
TOTAL RUNS												

Pfening Archives

West and Col. Cummins' Far East Show. In June 1912 Mark Herzfield was organizing a baseball team for which there were already twenty-two candidates. The team was practicing every day and Mark was hoping for a great team. The reporter also noted that he wanted "to say a word for that prince of good fellows, Frank Butler – you all know him – is going to give the boys their uniforms and outfits. Bully for you Frank: may you and Annie never see anything but the bright side of life."²⁰

A number of females had an interest in baseball, and female teams were common. The 1922 John Robinson Big Ten Shows had two of the fair sex baseball teams according to Doc Keene the Ball Team Publicity Agent. The teams were called the Red Birds and the Blue Birds and consisted of many female members of the aerialist act known as the "Flying Wards." The Red Birds team was: Ruby Chapin, pitcher; Louise Young, catcher; Mamie Ward, first base (cloud swing); Erma Ward, second base (aerial one arm planges); Adeline Nelson, center field; Emma Hiet, left field, and Virginia Young, short stop. The Blue Birds team was: Rose Russell, catcher; Theol Nelson, pitcher; Etta Carreon, first base; Oneida Nelson, second base; Mable Ward, third base (aerialist); Lillian Ward, right field (aerialist); Bobby Brant, center field; Nellie Ward, left field (cloud swing); and Estralia Nelson, short stop. A game with an admission

charge had been arranged with the noble Wichita Eagles for July 24, 1922. For this game the two Birds were combined to take on the Eagles. The Birds were then motivated to do daily drills for a 60 percent split of the \$500.00 gate receipts that they were promised in Wichita, Kansas.²¹ The Wichita Eagles also took on the John Robinson Baseball team and their battle was the only time that the circus team was defeated that season after creating a sensation along the various diamonds of the West.²²

The baseball teams of one circus would occasionally take on the baseball team of another show as part of the Inter-Top Baseball League. This idea flourished after the Ringling Brothers purchased a half interest in the Adam Forepaugh & Sells Bros. Circus in 1905 from James A. Bailey. They could route their shows to accommodate the baseball rivalry, and a year later after James A. Bailey's death, the Ringling Brothers acquired the total ownership of the show from Bailey's widow. The hosting show would provide entertainment for their employees as a select team and group of rooters would travel to the competitive match.

One of the earliest competitions took place on August 27, 1905 in a baseball game between members of the Adam Forepaugh & Sells Bros. Circus and the Ringling Bros. Shows at Ottumwa, Iowa. It was there that the Ringling Bros. Team "were victorious by the close score of four to



The game between Forepaugh-Sells and John Robinson, 1907

Zweifel Archives

three. Ten innings of rough tussling were required to gain a victory for the Ringlings, and the game was an excellent one despite the numerous errors. The big battle of the diamond was played to decide a dispute of long standing between the two huge canvas shows, and was an event that will live in the annals of the greatest American amusements – baseball and circuses.²³

On October 22, 1905, the Benevolent Order of American Tigers, a lodge of the Barnum & Bailey Circus gave a farewell banquet at Dallas, Texas. The following day the Adam Forepaugh & Sells Bros. Circus was to exhibit in McKinley, Texas, about thirty five miles away, and a num-

ber of the Forepaugh & Sells Bros. Circus came to celebrate the end of the Barnum & Bailey season. Prior to the banquet a game of baseball was played between teams representing the respective green rooms of the shows. The game resulted in a victory for the Forepaugh nine, the score being twenty to three.²⁴

The Forepaugh & Sells Bros. baseball team was active in the Inter-Top Baseball League play. At Hoopeston, Illinois on Sunday September 15, 1907 the Forepaugh/Sells team took on the members of the John Robinson Circus. The ball field was located at McFerren Park where a large number of the employees of both shows were present. The game “was stubbornly contested, and it required twelve innings to decide it, the Robinson’s winning finally by a score of seven to five.”²⁵

Having members of the show as ‘rooters’ in the stands always provide a much needed support for the show’s nine players. Such was the case of the John Robinson Ten Big Shows taking on the Barnum & Bailey Circus at Wheeling, West Virginia some fifty miles away in 1908. Jack Warren, the show’s *Billboard* correspondent wrote:



Teams from the Forepaugh-Sells and John Robinson shows of 1907

Zweifel Archives



The game between Forepaugh-Sells and John Robinson, 1907

Zweifel Archives

The baseball challenge which has issued through the columns of the *Billboard* by Harry Lamkin, one of the managers of the Ten Big, and also manager of our ball team, was accepted early in the week by the Barnum & Bailey team, and Wheeling, West Virginia, where the Barnum and Bailey's Sunday, was agreed upon as the meeting place.

So early Sunday morning July 5, on a special train, over three hundred Robinson rooters took themselves from Cambridge, Ohio and bid themselves thitherward. On the arrival of the train at Wheeling, where, of course the team fully expected someone to meet and greet them, but in this they were disappointed, and the opposition was conspicuous by their absence, and we wended our way to the Stamm Hotel, where we were treated right. At two o'clock we took cars for the ball park, where the grand stand already nearly full of Barnum & Bailey partisans. After a half hour of preliminary practice the game was called by Umpire Ed Dobbs. The first two innings of play made it certainly look bad for the Ten Allied, and the score stood two to zero in B. & B.'s favor.

But the third inning the boys of the Ten Big struck their true gait and made four runs. Then in the fifth inning, with three men on the bases, our Pete Weckler made a two base hit, which resulted in three more runners crossing the plate.

The score now stood seven to two in our favor, and here the police, under instructions from Chief Clemens, got busy and swooped onto the field and declared the game off, as ball games are not allowed in Wheeling on Sunday. That may all be so, but there is broad suspicion in our mind that the police were egged on to do their little stunt by some Barnum and Bailey official when they saw they were up against it. But we forgive them this time.

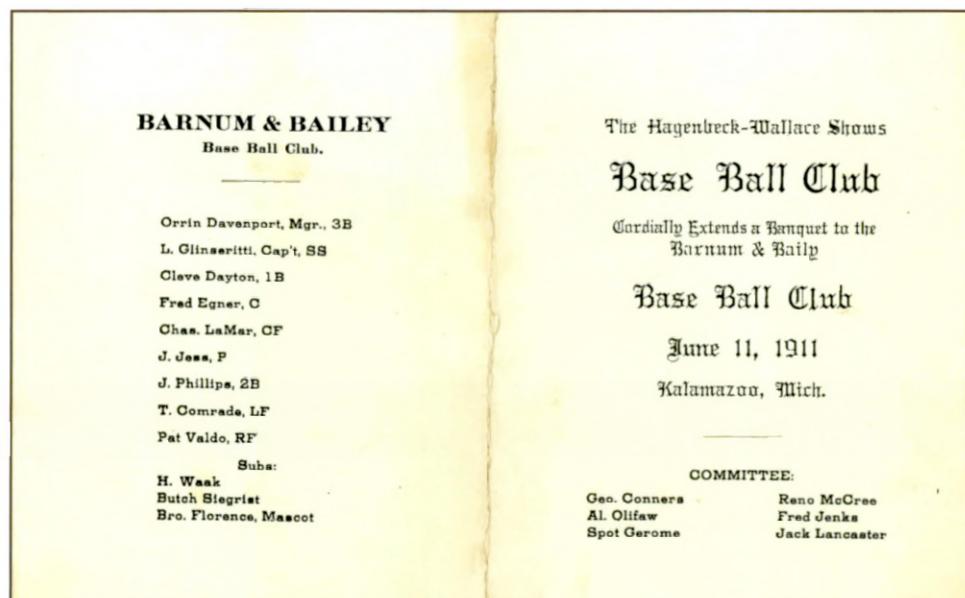
The feature of the game was great running catch by John Rooney's drive to left field, by Harry Burns of the B. & B. team, and he followed this

up by making a two-bagger next time up. It was a great game, and everyone thoroughly enjoyed it. After viewing the big top and menagerie and visiting around, greeting old friends and making new acquaintances, the men rode over to Martins Ferry, where we were the guests of that prince of good fellows, Harry Lamkin, and the celebration was kept up until train time.... The ride back to Cambridge was enlivened by the singing of Cornalla, assisted by entire company, not forgetting that the numerous battles of fizz water which were opened also helped to keep up the fun.²⁶

There were some rooters who followed the teams, but the boisterous teams were their best rooters and the 1909 Norris & Rowe Circus team could attest to that. Whenever the show's baseball nine won they would shout out their rallying cry: "One, two, three, Who are we? We are the Norris & Rowe bunch. Can't you see? Are we it? Well I should smile. We've been it for a h--l of a while!"²⁷

The *New York Clipper* published a story by Harry La Pearl in the June 24, 1911 edition that recorded a one hundred and forty mile road trip made by the Barnum & Bailey baseball team:

It is very seldom that the performers from one circus have an opportunity to visit another. While we were showing in Detroit, Michigan on June 12,



Outside of the menu for the 1911 banquet following a game between Hagenbeck-Wallace and Barnum & Bailey

Pfening Archives

about forty of the Barnum & Bailey performers made a jump to Kalamazoo, Michigan where they were booked to play a game of ball with the Hagenbeck-Wallace performers. They left Detroit at 8:20 in a private car, and those rooters who made the trip were: Kid Kennard, Toby Thomas (the brother of Walter Thomas), Alfredo Codona, Eddie De Voe, Tony Dekos, Bento Bros., James Peachinia, Joseph Dekos, Charles Fisher, Charles Sibion, Arthur Konyot, Brother Florence, Doctor Grabie, Freddie Derrick, George Byron, Thomas Hart, Everett Hart, Harry La Pearl, Mr. and Mrs. M. Graves, Jessie Fields, Marie Eiser, Mrs. V. Davenport, May Davenport, Mrs. E. Florence. These were rooters.

Everyone was well equipped with all necessary implements to root for the game. The song they rehearsed on the train was:

Take us out to the ball game, To the Hagenbeck Show. If we don't win it will be a sin, And the boys will cop all of our dough. We have a very good line-up, So they say, has been framed. But it's 2, 4, 6 dollars fare, To the old ball game....

The college yell went something like "One, two, three, who are we? We are from the B. & B. We don't come for picture takin', We came here to get the bacon" But the results of the game was the rind. Score: nine to five in favor of the Hagenbeck-Wallace.

The principal rooters for the Hagenbeck-Wallace

Show were: Mrs. Lloyd, Mrs. And Miss Lancaster, Mrs. Clark, Anna Connors, Mrs. George Connors, Mrs. Reno McCree, Mrs. Fred Glassclock, Mrs. Fred Fisher, Mrs. Fred Jinks, Mrs. Art Nelson, and Mrs. Bert Cole. Arthur Borella took the clown band to the grandstand and furnished the music during the game.

Line-Up, Barnum & Bailey Team - L. Glinseretti, sort stop, captain; Orin Davenport, third base, manager; J. Phillips, second base; A Jess, pitcher; F. Egner, catcher; C. La Mar, center field; C. Dayton, first base; B. Seigrist, left field; Pat Valdo, right field; H. Wask, pitcher; T. Comrade, left field; Pewee Dollar, mascot.

Line-Up, Hagenbeck-Wallace Team - A. Dobbins, third base; F. Smith, pitcher; A. Olifan, short stop; W. Hesse, first base; J. Sulivan, second base; J. Joyce, third base; Rogers, fight field; G. Connors, center field; Linsey, left field; Campbell, McCress, Bedini, subs; Charles Navarro, Mascot.

It is hard to say which side made the best plays, as they were all done well, but the Wallace did better in the scoring. The main event of the day was a banquet tendered by the Wallace Show to the visitors from the Barnum & Bailey. Shortly after the game we were ushered to the cook tent, where the menu was:

Radishes, green onions, olives, chicken fricassee, prime rib of beef, new potatoes with cream, new peas, asparagus on toast, combination salad with mayonnaise dressing, strawberries, ice cream, cake, coffee, iced tea, milk refreshments of all kinds, and plenty of them.

The cook tent was beautifully decorated with flags and pictures of Hagenbeck and Wallace and Barnum and Bailey. A seven piece Kalamazoo orchestra furnished the music for the banquet and the dance which followed. The tables were removed and a large platform was erected for the dance floor... The party broke up at 11:30. A special street car took the bunch to the depot the next a.m. When we arrived in the dressing room

Menu.

RELISHES		
Green Onions	Radishes	Olives
ENTREES		
Chicken Fricassee		
ROASTS		
Prime Rib of Beef		
VEGETABLES		
New Peas	New Potatoes with Cream	Asparagus on Toast
SALAD		
Combination Salad with Mayonnaise Dressing		
DESERTS		
Strawberries	Vanilla Ice Cream	Cake
Coffee	Iced Tea	Milk

HAGENBECK-WALLACE

Base Ball Club.

Geo. Connors, Mgr.
Al. Olifan, Cap't, SS
Jim Sullivan, 2B
Bill Hesse, 1B
Andy Dobbins, C
Jack Joyce, P
Al Miller, 3B
Frank Smith, LF
John Rogers, RF
E. Bodino, CF
Subs:
Reno McCree, Jr.
Al Campbell
Tom Linsley
Charlie Navarro, Mascot

Inside of the menu for the 1911 banquet following a game between Hagenbeck-Wallace and Barnum & Bailey

Pfening Archives

Orrin Davenport's truck was decorated with ball bats, base balls and gloves. All were decorated with crepe paper. The sign read: "Don't wake me up, I am dreaming." It was one glorious event, and the boys wish to thank the Wallace Show again for the courtesy shown them.

Competition between baseball teams was promoted by the Zanesville, Ohio Chamber of Commerce. The Barnum & Bailey Circus was scheduled to perform there on Monday July 15, and a game was scheduled between the Commercial Travelers and the circus team. The *New York Clipper* on July 27, 1912 recorded the event: "All the boys of the B & B have the baseball craze. The "Moose" played the Commercial Travelers at Zanesville at the "League Park." The band crowd turned out en masse to watch the boys beat the U.C.Ts. The "Moose" team had the game right from the start and played like a league team. Earl Dayton deserves credit for the splendid way in which he pitched. Others of the Moose team worthy of praise are: Cleve Dayton, catcher; Orrin Davenport, right field; Milvo, center field; Amando, second base. The score was Moose - 13, U.C.Ts - 2. The Moose team anticipate playing the "Wallace" Show team on Sunday next."

According to the August 2, 1913 issue of the *New York Clipper* the Sparks Circus was playing games every Sunday and "while they have not yet won, they are putting up a good stiff resistance." The manager and captain of the team was Jack Phillips and Clifton Sparks (the son of the owner) was doing most of the pitching. New uniforms had just ar-

rived for the team and they "are ready for challenges from any team within a Sunday jump."

The 1914 Sparks Show had a baseball team that played their first practice game at Sandwich, Illinois in early June. The owner's son Clifton Sparks was the pitcher, a number of errors caused the team's defeat by a score of four to one to the locals. The ball team played its first real game with the Decorah Iowa Nine and won by a score of sixteen to three. "It was the first real test of the strength of the team, and certainly lived up to all expectations. For the first three innings they played ball and after that horse with their opponents, batting two pitchers all over the lot and running bases at will. Clifton Sparks pitched a brilliant game, striking out fifteen men, and Willie Green gave him splendid support behind the plate. Bartlett led in batting, one drive being for three bases. Leffingwell, Guy Cohen, and Jack Phillips fielded well. The team was loyally supported by the show folks, and the ladies provided enthusiastic rooters. The home team pinned their faith on Bloomfield, but the first time up Clifton Sparks banged out a two bagger, and from then on he was a bloomer."²⁸

A few weeks later Fletcher Smith noted in his *Sparks' Show Notes* that they were close to the Gollmar Bros. Circus which also had a baseball team. It turned out that the shows were only twenty miles apart the previous Sunday, and a game was arranged by telephone. The Sparks team hired drivers and went over, winning a decisive victory with the score of ten to three. The team also got enough out of the gate receipts to pay for the hiring of the automobiles to transport the show to the game.²⁹

The Gollmar Bros. Circus of 1914 also had a team made up of James A. Harris' Colored Band which was the side show band for they were "all ball players and will be glad to meet any team." Eddie Jackson was the team captain, Jim Green was known as Captain Jinks and played alto; Prof. James A. Harris played trombone; Eugene Hopkins played cornet; R. S. Cope-land played cornet, Frank R. Robinson played clarinet, Buddie James played alto; Elmer Scott played baritone; Kilmer Jackson played trap drummer; Slim Mason played bass drummer. The sideshow band was known as the Gollmar Tigers, and the ball team played the Madison, South Dakota ball



Sparks show's baseball team

Pfening Archives

team on a Sunday in early June. This was the show team's first game of the season, which was lost to the locals by a score of seven to six in a hotly contested game. The team was "willing to meet all show teams, the Barnum & Bailey teams preferred, or any other local team." Eddie Jackson was still holding his own as the trap drummer and was the captain of the ball team again this season.³⁰

The Sparks Show was active in the Inter-Top circus league. During the 1922 season the Sparks Circus was scheduled to perform at Albion, Michigan Monday, August 14, while the Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus was scheduled to perform in Jackson, Michigan twenty miles away on Monday. Almost every member of the show made the trip to Albion and the Sparks' management furnished dinner to the guests in the cook tent after the game. The Hagenbeck-Wallace team defeated the Sparks Circus team by a score of eight to six.

Among the visitors from the Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus that Sunday were Mrs. William Curtis, wardrobe mistress; John Helliot, animal trainer; Mr. and Mrs. Ringling; W. R. Kellogg, legal adjuster; George Conners, equestrian director; Bert Cole; Orin Davenport; Lulu Davenport; Mr. and Mrs. Ed Dowling and daughter.

ter (motored over); Walter and Mrs. Goodenough, clown act; Cecil Lawanda, principal riding act; Jimmy Yanonta; Virginia Arearis; Mr. and Mrs. Delmore; Harry Jackson; Peter McLaren and Jack Warren. From the Wild West continent there were Earl and Mrs. Sutton; John and Mrs. McCracken; Al and Mrs. Faulk; Ed and Mrs. Bowman and John Davis.³¹

Not all the baseball activities on the various circuses had a commemorative photograph taken nor were they chronicled in the circus route books, trade papers or the newspapers of the day. Even with pretty Dorothy Herbert as a mascot for the 1934 Ringling Bros. & Barnum & Bailey



1913 Gollmar Bros. base-ball team

The Ringling Museum, Tibbals Collection



Gollmar Bros. All Nations Ball Team, 1915

Pfenning Archives

baseball team, little is known about their activities. Perhaps it is summed up best when one of the largest gatherings of circus baseball teams took place on Sunday June 5, 1932 when members of the Ringling Bros. & Barnum & Bailey Team, the Sells-Floto Team and the Hagenbeck-Wallace Team, the Sells-Floto Team and the Hagenbeck-Wallace

Team met. This gathering of the three baseball teams was recorded in a special photograph by the noted photographer Edward J. Kelty. The *Billboard* simply noted that Kelty was taking various photos on the lot that day and did not mention anything in particular about the gathering. **BW**

Endnotes

1. *New York Clipper*, June 24, 1911.
2. *New York Clipper*, August 30, 1890.
3. *The Billboard*, June 29, 1901.
4. *New York Clipper*, November 18, 1905.
5. *New York Clipper*, August 4, 1894.
6. *New York Clipper*, July 6, 1895.
7. *1896 Season Route Book of the Buffalo Bill Wild West*.
8. *Detroit Free Press*, July 27, 1896.
9. *New York Clipper*, July 24, 1897.
10. *New York Clipper*, May 29, 1897.
11. *Ringling Bros. 1898 Season Route Book*.
12. *Adam Forepaugh/Sells Bros. 1900 Season Route Book*.
13. *Duluth Evening Herald*, July 7, 1906.
14. *The Billboard*, June 18, 1904.
15. *New York Clipper*, July 8, 1911.
16. *New York Clipper*, August 3, 1912.
17. *Bandwagon* magazine, September- October 1967.
18. Ibid.
19. *New York Clipper*, July 8, 1911.
20. *New York Clipper*, June 29, 1912.
21. *The Billboard*, July 22, 1922.
22. *The Billboard*, August 26, 1922.
23. *New York Clipper*, September 9, 1905.
24. *New York Clipper*, November 18, 1905.
25. *New York Clipper*, October 5, 1907.
26. *The Billboard*, July 18, 1908.
27. *The Billboard*, March 19, 1910.
28. *New York Clipper*, June 20, 1914.
29. *New York Clipper*, August 1, 1914.
30. *Indianapolis Freeman*, May 19, 1914 & June 4, 1914.
31. *The Billboard*, August 16, 1922.



A 1932 meeting of baseball teams from the Ringling show, Hagenbeck-Wallace, and Sells-Floto documented by Edward Kelty.

The Ringling Museum, Tibbals Collection

THE 4-PAW BASE BALL CLUB



N. Johnson, C. F., W. Henchey, 3B., H. Lipp, R. F., O. Lowande, Mgr., F. Egner, C., E. Bong 1B., T. Jacobs, L. F., H. Lamkin, Fielder, J. Debollen, P., J. Lancaster, C., J. Gorman, 2B., R. Launder, S.S.

The above represents neither the New York Giants nor the Cincinnati Reds, but the victorious Forepaugh Baseball Club, which met the Ringling Club on the diamond at El Reno, Okla., Sunday, Oct. 8, and defeated them. There was no pennant up, however, and besides the boys had the good time for which they were looking. Suffice it to say that the 4-Paws pulled through with over twenty runs and they succeeded in shutting their opponents off with less than three. The crowd that witnessed the game was considered the largest gathering of circus people for a similar purpose. The above team is considered one of the best and fastest circus teams ever organized. They are matched for a game with the Barnum & Bailey Club at Dallas, T. *Oct. 22.*



Above, 1921 Hagenbeck-Wallace baseball team

The Ringling Museum, Tibbals Collection

Left, a clipping about the Forepaugh-Sells team, circa 1907

The Ringling Museum, Tibbals Collection



An undated photo of a Hagenbeck-Wallace baseball team

The Ringling Museum, Tibbals Collection



An undated outing photo from the Thomas scrapbook

Zweifel Archives



A race in the train yard with Forepaugh-Sells cars in the background

Zweifel Archives

While doing research in the Zweifel Archives in Orlando, Florida the author came across a scrapbook of turn of the century postcards that had been created by Walter Thomas. Walter was a bar performer on the Adam Forepaugh & Sells Bros. Circus, the 1908 Cole Bros. Circus, the 1910 Gentry Bros. Circus, the 1912

Parker Carnival Company playing in Canada, and in 1913 he returned to the Gentry Bros. Circus. His brother Toby Thomas was on the 1910 Barnum & Bailey Circus and they corresponded exchanging postcards over the years showing activities on those circuses. The scrapbook also included a number of photos showing the per-

formers making up for lost pleasure. There were excursions to the seaside, the mountains, foot-hills, and other amusements from foot races to circus baseball teams. The history of the circus baseball teams required more research and the preceding article is the result of those labors.



Real photo postcard sent from Toby Thomas to his brother Walter showing members of the Barnum & Bailey show circa 1910.

Zweifel Archives

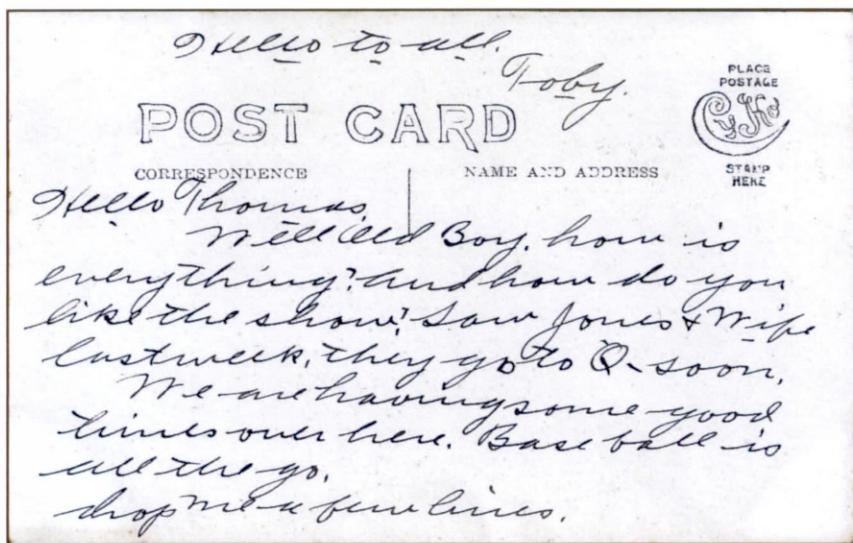


A 1912 picnic from the Thomas scrapbook

Zweifel Archives

An undated outing to the seaside from the Thomas scrapbook.

Zweifel Archives

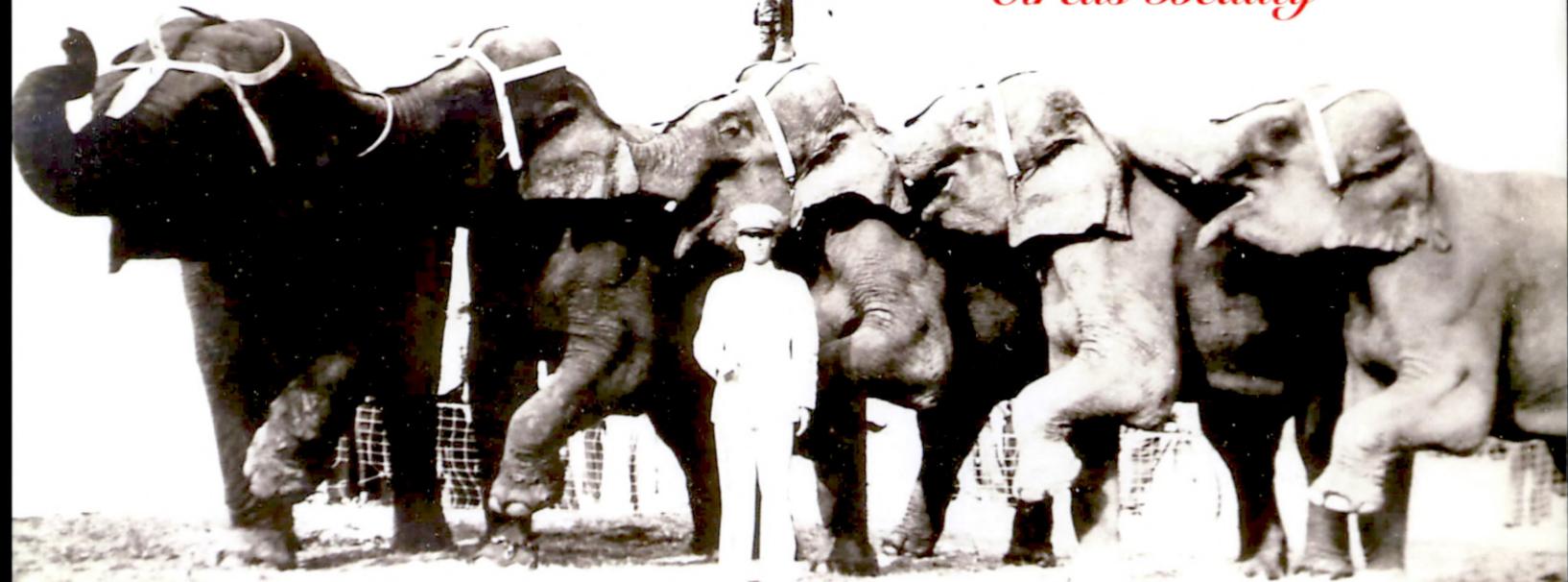




Jean Allen

*The Multi-Talented
Circus Beauty*

by John Daniel Draper



Fifteen cowgirls raced around the hippodrome track in daring feats of fast riding during the 1931 Miller Bros. 101 Ranch season. One of these dazzling young ladies was nineteen-year-old Jean Fisher from Dalton, Pennsylvania, a small village of about 1,200 people, just northwest of Scranton. Her father, Zebbie Fisher, was to be president of the Showmen's League of America just two years later. Jean was embarking on a career that would find her headlining on some of America's great tented circuses.

The 1931 season was the last for the 101 Ranch Wild West and, after being stranded in Washington, D.C. for several weeks during the summer of that year, the train was finally loaded and sent back to the Miller ranch near Marland, Oklahoma. At some time during the next three years, Jean fell in love with Eddie Allen, the bull man for the 101 Ranch. The young couple was married in Davenport, Iowa on June 20, 1934.

That same year, Jean and Eddie Allen appeared on Barnett Bros. Circus presenting the Ranch elephants, a herd of five. Eddie had been with various 101 Ranch Show organizations, and became superintendent of elephants on Barnett Bros. Jean was quickly integrated into the presentation of the bulls and would, over time, become a skilled trainer

Eddie and Jean Allen with the 101 Ranch elephants in the early 1930s

William Woodcock, Buckles Blog

and presenter of elephants.

In the early years of their marriage, Jean and Eddie would often find themselves separated during the winter seasons. In March of 1935, Jean appeared on the bill for the Tangier Shrine and Aksarben Combined Indoor Circus at Omaha, presenting high school horses with Jorgen Christiansen. Spencer Huntley presented the elephants. Eddie Allen was at the Cleveland Grotto Circus, directed by Orrin Davenport, presenting the Cole Bros. elephants with Wanda Wentz. Eddie presented the Cole elephants at the Canton Shrine Circus and Jean performed with five elephants at the Grand Rapids Shrine Show that spring.

For the 1935 season Eddie Allen was elephant boss and trainer for Cole Bros. This was the first year for this show, put out by Jess Adkins and Zack Terrell. It traveled on fifteen flats and nine coaches, with eighteen cages and two Mack tractors. The show opened indoors on April 20th in Chicago. In Display #17, five ponderous bulls were in each ring. All were excellently trained. By May, Cole Bros. had a very fast elephant act that went through the usual routines

without a hitch. They were worked by Jean Allen, Estrella Nelson, and High-Pockets.

In 1935 the Cole show carried twenty-six elephants, including the only African elephant on tour that year, Jumbo II, and also Bama. Twenty-four of these elephants paraded, while Bama worked on the lot and Jumbo II appeared only in the menagerie. When Jumbo II suffered from a bruised left front foot with an infection, Jimmy O'Connell and Eddie Allen were there with remedies. By that May, Cole Bros. again had a very fast elephant act that featured Wanda Wentz, Eddie Allen, and Jean Allen. Jean was also riding "Sunburst", a Carioca dancing equine. She also did the waltz and rear.

Having predominately horse acts or displays in the Cole Bros. program, Mr. Zack Terrell had high regards for women that were accomplished horse people such as Jean Allen, Dorothy Herbert, Marion Knowlton, Babe Woodcock, Anne Hamilton, Gee Gee Engesser, Georgia Sweet, Jinx Adams, Shirley Byron. These performers and others who could ride and also present and style the elephant acts were rated above the general "bally girls" and given status in the "ladies dressing room." Having abilities with high school horses, manège, specialty horses (waltz and rear), Roman riding (including the sixteen horse hitch in the hippodrome races), trick riding, and bareback riding, Jean and her contemporaries were stalwarts for the Cole show as well as other tented shows of the era. The women's multi-faceted performances made them essential to a show's success.

At the end of the Cole Bros. season in November 1935, Eddie Allen was complimented for his fine job with the elephants, especially with the one from Africa. It was then that he announced that he and his wife, Jean, were going to spend some time in Rochester, Indiana at the Cole winter quarters.

For the winter season of 1935-36, a Cole Bros. unit was booked into a number of winter circuses. Allen had the elephants, John Smith had twelve manège horses, and Albert Fleet and Jack Joyce presented the sea lions.

The following year Eddie Allen continued as master elephant trainer on Cole Bros. Circus and later at the Chicago Stadium. Jean was an elephant trainer, presenting eight bulls in the center ring while Wanda Wentz presented four in Ring 1 and Betty Stevens had five in Ring 3. Jean Allen also rode a manège horse. The elephants, Jumbo II and Bama, did not make the parade.

On Thanksgiving Day of 1936 Jumbo II died at the Rochester quarters. One of his handlers gave him a bottled soda pop. He broke the bottle and swallowed a large piece of glass before the attendants could stop him. He died shortly afterwards. In the

Cole Bros. Circus poster, circa 1945

The Ringling Museum, Tibbals Collection





Jean Allen with Jumbo II on Cole Bros. Circus at Los Angeles, September of 1936

William Woodcock, Buckles Blog

book, *Fun by the Ton* by Edward Allen and F. Beverly Kelley, it is stated that the autopsy of Jumbo II revealed that he had tuberculosis. The remains of the nineteen year old African elephant were given to the Smithsonian Museum. A team of experts came to the Rochester quarters and prepared the specimen for shipment to Washington, D.C. His death represented a great loss to the circus since he was the ace menagerie attraction. Purchased by Cole Bros. in early 1935 from the Detroit, Michigan Zoo, the elephant who had originally been named Safari was immediately renamed Jumbo II.

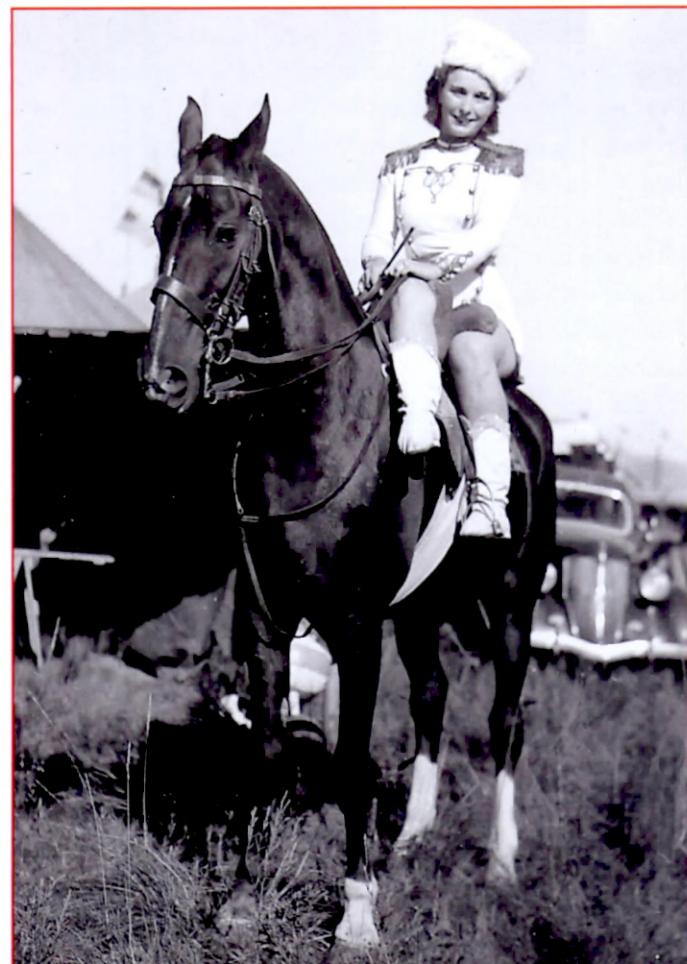
Along with appearances at Shrine dates, the winter of 1936-37 was spent building a forty car show for the Cole Bros. upcoming season. Eddie Allen was superintendent of elephants and Eugene (Arky) Scott was superintendent of the menagerie.

In 1937 Eddie and Jean continued in the roles they had for the previous year. Jean Allen was the only lady elephant trainer in the New York Hippodrome program with Cole Bros. Circus that year. The climax to the act came with a spectacular long mount on the track. At the Chicago Stadium there were 12,000 in attendance and the elephant du-

ties were shared with Betty Stevens and Wanda Wentz, with five elephants each in the end rings. In the center ring Jean Allen's elephants were one of the fastest paced bull acts of their time. Attractive Miss Allen paced eight of the Cole elephants in stunts that reflected up to the minute trends in trained animal presentations. Her four grooms worked with enviable skill and Jean, strictly on her own in the outstanding act, had the situation well in hand at all times.

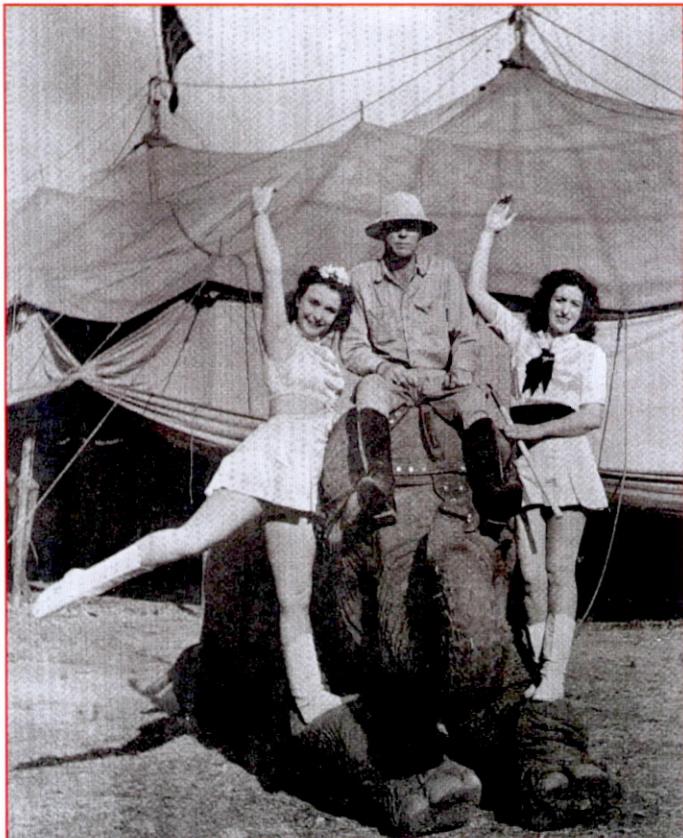
For the Zuhrah Shrine show in 1937 Jean headed a group of ten women high school riders. She also worked the Cole Bros. elephants. At the St. Paul, Minnesota Shrine Show she was one of the riders in John Smith's group of lady riders. The other riders were Martha Joyce, Iva Clark, Dorothy Carter, Gladys Wyckoff, Norma Humes, Bobby Peck, Jean Evans, Anna Buller, and Betty Stephens. Jean Allen also worked the elephants.

The 1938 season on Cole Bros. and in Chicago Stadium was a continuation of the 1937 season. Jean Allen rode a manège horse and worked one of three single elephant acts, with her partners Wanda Wentz and Betty Stevens.



Jean Allen mounted on Amberking on Downie Bros. Circus in 1939.

William Woodcock, Buckles Blog



Jean Allen, Eugene (Arky) Scott, Marion Knowlton, Cole Bros. Circus, 1942

Author's collection

All were under the general supervision of Eddie Allen. They went through formations and various stunts, climaxed by a mass salute. In display #17 Dorothy Herbert did dare devil riding and led a group of riders through feats of high jumping and hurdling.

In the Indianapolis Murat Shrine Circus that year Eddie Allen presented a pony act while Jean Allen rode one of eight highly gaited thoroughbreds at the Zuhrah Shrine. The other riders were Norma Humes, Gladys Smith, Betty Stephens, Wanda Wentz, Betty Cook, Helen Sharon, and Cosette Cristiani. Jean Allen presented a great troupe of dancing Siamese elephants in a single display. At the end of the act they saluted under the direction of their master trainer, Miss Allen.

The recession that struck the United States in 1937-1938 took its toll on the traveling entertainment industry. At the close of the disastrous 1938 season, both Eddie and Jean left Cole Bros. Circus. After only four years of

marriage, the couple was divorced, although their professional paths crossed frequently for several years.

Jean was on the Zuhrah Shrine Circus in 1939 where she did high school riding and performed with the Cole Bros. elephants. High school horses were ridden and driven by the most talented of manège riders: Gladys Wyckoff, Edna Curtis, Viola Barnett, and Nell Wilbur on one stage; Esma Wilson, Betty Stephens, Jean Allen, and Irene Ledgett in the ring and Helen Sharon, John Smith, and Norris Wynn were on a second stage. Eddie Allen was assistant equestrian director. For a short period he was equestrian director of Olympia Circus. For a while Jean Allen was with Downie Bros. as a manège rider and Eddie was assistant treasurer there.

In 1940 Eddie Allen was again associated with Edna Curtis at the Minneapolis Zuhrah Shrine as the assistant equestrian director. There was skilled horsemanship led by Edna Dee driving "General Grant". The riders were Jean Allen, Norris Wynn, Etta Carreon, Jinx Hoaglan, Clara Hoaglan, Dot Hoaglan, Carlos Carreon, Benny Moore, and Hal Hoaglan. Eddie was also for a time equestrian director of the Hamid-Morton Circus while Jean participated in the wild west as well as working with the elephants. In April Eddie served as equestrian director of Olympia Circus and the next month he was the general superintendent of Wallace



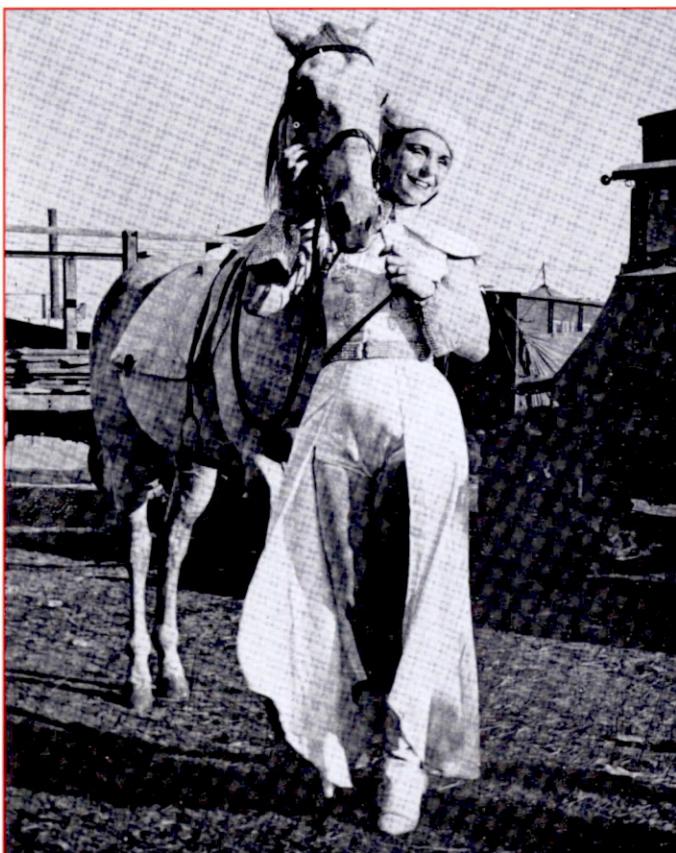
Jean Allen at Cole Bros. Louisville quarters prior to the 1943 season

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Bros. Jean was riding manège on Wallace Bros. On May 26, Jean Allen, T. P. Lewis, and other performers from Wallace Bros. visited the Cole Bros. Circus at Dover, Ohio, traveling the eighteen miles from Braddock, Pennsylvania where the Wallace Show was set up. Eddie Allen was in Houston, Texas buying stock and equipment for the Wallace Show from the former Downie Bros. Circus. While there he also negotiated for some of the prize manège horses which had been with Downie. They were to be used on the Wallace Show.

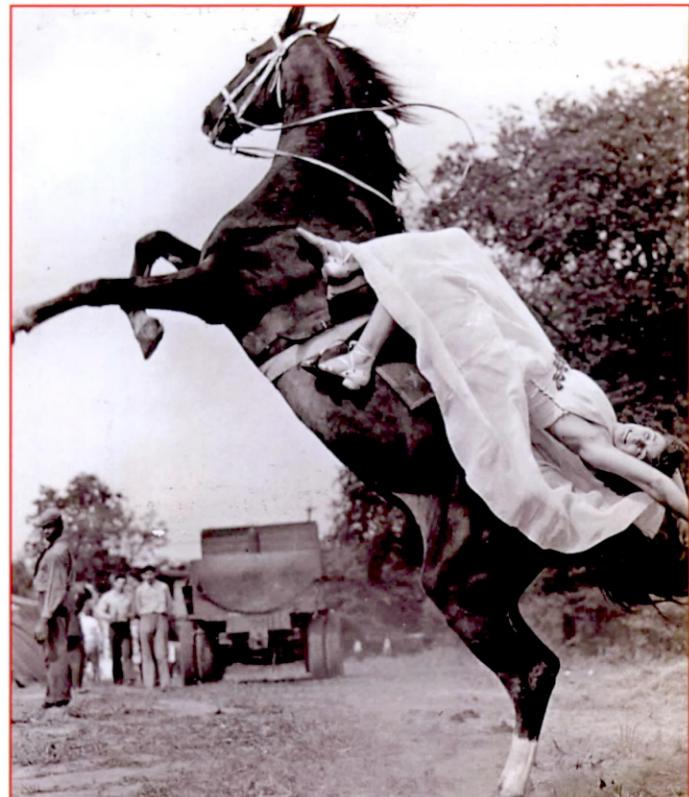
By December of 1940 Jean Allen had arrived at the Cole Bros. quarters in Louisville, Kentucky; the new location was due to a fire that destroyed the Rochester quarters. Jean with her horse, Amberking, worked with June Russell to train a manège act.

In 1941 on Cole Bros. there were fifteen lady riders including Jean Allen, Shirley Byron, Ethel Freeman, Hazel King, Wanda Wentz, Marion Knowlton, Helen Partello, and Ruth Clark. Also in that number was Dorothy Herbert whose sixteen horse Roman standing hitch pounding down the narrow track almost put the spectators in the act by kicking up the shavings. Jean Allen, in addition to riding high school in formal riding costume with high silk hat,



Jean Allen, Cole Bros. Circus, 1941

Author's collection



Jean Allen on rearing Amberking on Cole Bros. Circus, 1943

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worked elephants.

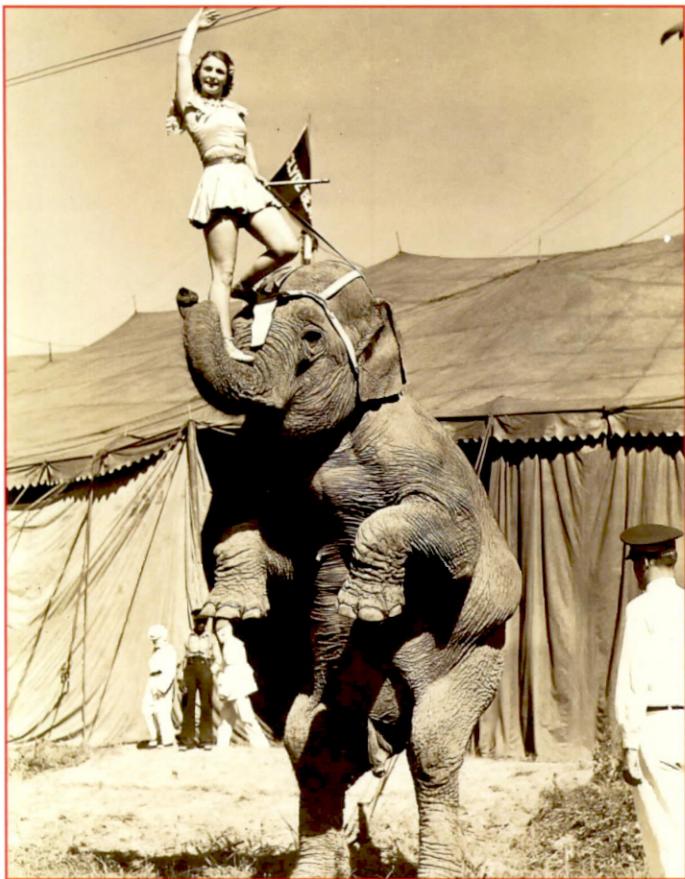
In March of 1941 it was announced that Eddie Allen, formerly with Cole Bros., had been for part of the last season manager of one of Barnes-Carruther's fair units. Also since September of 1940 he had been personal manager for Gene Autry and at the present time he was living in Hollywood, California.

Cole Bros. quarters at Louisville was very active in December 1941. Ruth Nelson was working new pony drills and Jean Allen was practicing with the elephants and gaited horses.

In 1942 Jean Allen was promoted as the daring girl rider of reinless high hurdle jumping horses. She headed a vast assemblage of the "world's greatest riders." These included Josephine Cofield, Golda Grady, Polly Insley, Marion Knowlton, Helen Partello, Ethel Freeman, Ruth Nelson, Aletha Clark, and Gertrude Scott.

Jean also participated in the elephant ballet under the direction of Arky Scott. Helen Scott, Jean Allen, and Marion Knowlton handled the elephants in the rings.

In spite of her success within the rings, Jean Allen seemed to remain a very down-to-earth woman. In Freddie Freeman's gossip column in the *Billboard* magazine he



Jean Allen on elephant on Cole Bros. Circus in 1944

William Woodcock, Buckles Blog

noted that Jean was one of the six who walked to the lot every day from the train.

In October of 1942 a very complete account concerning Jean Allen appeared in the local newspaper in Victoria, Texas. She was described as a noted rider of registered saddle horses and also of Amberking, the high jumping and rearing horse. They called her the madcap rider of the big show and equestrian suicide rider, but these appellations suggested only reckless daring. Jean Allen, double-star equestrienne of Cole Bros. Circus was first of all the most thoroughly schooled of riders to electrify any big top performance.

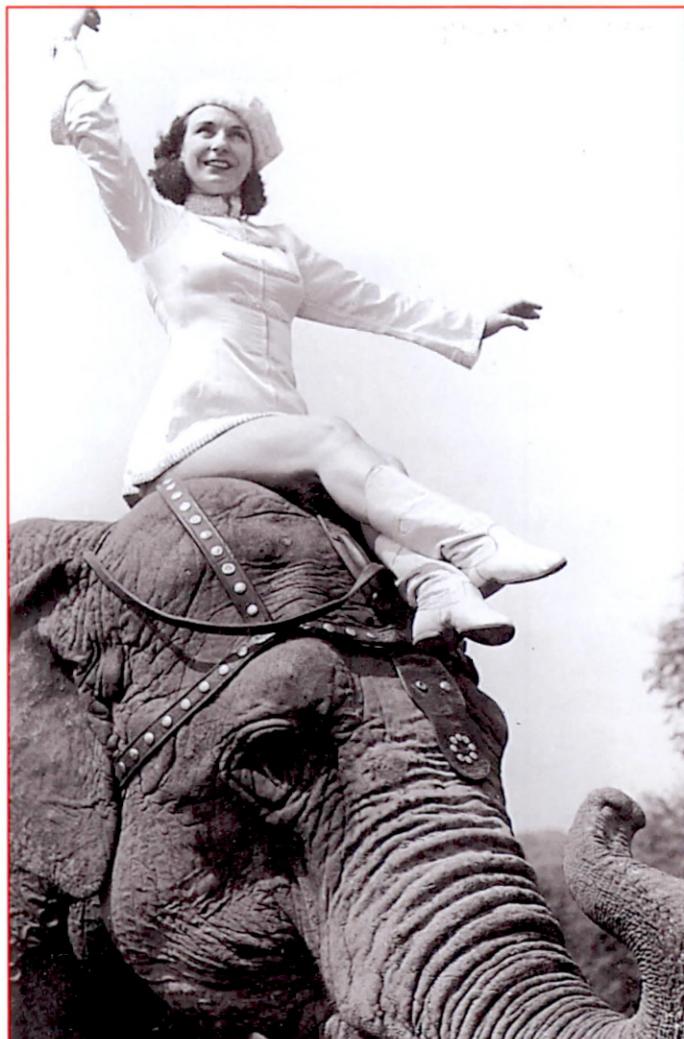
Jean, who headed the thrilling high school and jumping horse displays, was only thirty years of age, yet she had been in the saddle for seventeen years. She was taught horsemanship and equitation by noted trainers when she was but twelve years old and had more than justified the efforts of her early trainers. She was the finest riding star of the times and no one who saw her breathtaking feats in the rings and around the hippodrome track could ever forget her, even though she rode with a number of other girl rid-

ers surrounding her. She was daring and strikingly pretty. She had everything the riding star should have and to top it all, over 1,000 friends including the Cole Bros. show's entire roster.

For 1943 Edward Allen was made superintendent of elephants for Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey. He trained the elephants for the *Changing of the Guard* production. Jean Allen on Cole Bros. was a daring rider of rearing, hurdle jumping, and waltzing horses. She rode side saddle on Amberking in a full rear. With great daring she whirled around the hippodrome track at break neck speed.

That year Cole Bros. had the fastest group of working elephants in the business, both in and out of the rings. They were worked by Arky Scott with Jean Allen, Marion Knowlton, and Helen Scott. Jean also participated in the sea lion act.

In March of 1943 Cole Bros. had sent a car load of ele-



Jean Allen on Cole Bros. Circus about 1944

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Jean Allen on Cole Bros. Circus

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phants, liberty horses, ponies, and seals to Orrin Davenport at St. Paul, Minnesota and Lansing, Michigan. Arky Scott was in charge of the elephants, John Smith of the horses, and Jean Allen and Ed Madison of the seals.

Jean Allen in 1944 appeared in the Cole Bros. elephant ballet with Helen Scott and Marion Knowlton under the general direction of Arky Scott. Jean also rode a manège and a high school horse. Fourteen riders were featured in three rings and on the hippodrome track. Included in the group were Marion Knowlton, Georgia Sweet, Helen Scott, Bobby Peck, Nena Thomas, Helen Partello, Golda Grady, Josephine Cofield, and Ethel Freeman. Trained sea lion acts were given by Jean in ring #1 and by Marion Knowlton in ring #3. Paul Nelson had a bareback riding seal in the center ring. The famous boxing match of Otto Griebing and Freddie Freeman was also featured that season.

Jean Allen had elephants on the 1944 St. Paul, Minnesota Osman Temple Shrine Circus and she rode manège on the Wild West Rodeo and Thrill Circus at the Chicago Stadium.

Eddie Allen continued as elephant superintendent on

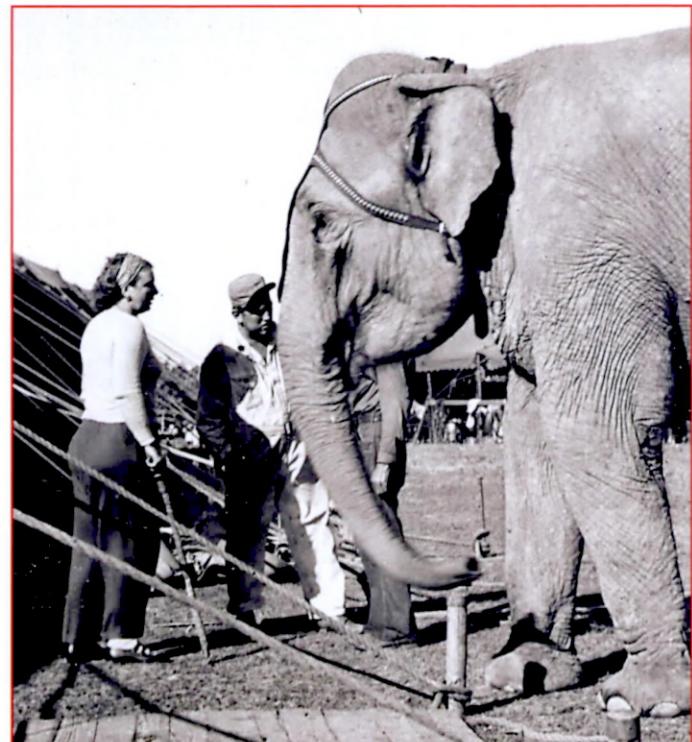
Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey.

In 1945 Jean Allen retired as an elephant performer on Cole Bros. Circus. She continued on Cole Bros. riding gaited and hurdle jumping horses until at least the end of June. There is a Cole Bros. ad dated Tuesday, June 26th illustrating her skill on a rearing horse. Soon after this date she went over to Dailey Bros. Circus to work with E. J. Rumble as manager of the pie car on the train. The car had a pay desk at one end and an exit at the other while a long string of "one arm bandits" graced an entire wall. Ben Davenport felt that this arrangement kept the money "in the family."

For the next two seasons she continued working in the pie car. In 1948 she became manager of cotton candy and the concessions. That year she was at Delavan, Wisconsin in a Cole Bros. parade which went on five and a half hours late. It included six dens of wild animals including one with Jean Allen riding in the sideshow fighting lion den.

For the opening date of the 1949 Dailey Bros. season at Gonzales, Texas, the Gonzales Warm Springs Foundation was the sponsor. The show gave a special performance at the Rehabilitation Hospital and put on a parade downtown. At 1 PM all guests were welcomed to the cookhouse. During these activities, Jean Allen, on the circus grounds, was whirling candy floss for all the kids.

In 1950 Charles "Butch" Cohn, assistant manager and



Jean Allen with an elephant on the Dailey Bros. show, circa 1948

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Cole Bros. Circus poster, circa 1942

The Ringling Museum, Tibbals Collection

treasurer for Dailey Bros., signed as concession manager of King Bros. Jean Allen accompanied him to King Bros. in the concessions department. In the years 1954 and 1955 Jean Allen was also listed as an equestrienne on King Bros.

On January 12, 1966 Jean Allen was killed at age 52 in an automobile wreck near Gonzales, Texas. Her car hit a bridge while she was on her way to visit Mrs. Danny Odom, widow of the former manager of the Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus, in San Antonio.

She was survived by her father, Zebbie Fisher, and a sister, Mabel Dickinson of Dalton, Pennsylvania. Interment was in Scranton, Pennsylvania.

In 1980 Beverly Kelley made a personal reference to her. He said: "Jean Allen was the wife of Eddie Allen, was a good person, became heavy later. She made good in the candy apple business." It may also be significantly added that she had been a most pleasing and talented performer. **BW**

In Memory of Jean Allen

by Leonard V. Farley

On a cold night silently you
Dispensed a glass, amber in color,
To those men
Weary with wrestling rain sodden canvas.
"Neath the summer sun,
Above a spinning plate you stood.
Children waited, eyes gaping,
For the strawberry colored gossamer sugar
Paper wrapped.
In your flat topped trunk,
No longer palm stained with twice daily use
A bull hook,
Relegated to a corner
In the barn
A favorite saddle.
You did not make tournament that matinee.
As the flags came down at sunset
You left the lot!
With silent oaths the flats were loaded.
Glasses were raised high for
You had simply gone to join another Show!



